

Gunmen kill 3 Algerian border guards

ALGIERS (R) — About 60 armed raiders killed three Algerian guards and seized their weapons Friday in a pre-dawn attack on a desert border post, the Algerian news agency APS said. The scarcely-populated area near the Tunisian frontier is a hideout for Islamic militant outfits led by a man known as "Tayeb the Afghan" because of his frequent visits to Afghanistan. One attacker was seriously wounded in the raid, the third reported attack in a week on security forces in the region. The others escaped with their arms haul. "Units of the national gendarmerie and special troops of the army are actively seeking the group," the Defence Ministry, quoted by APS, said. The ministry linked the attack to a militant group around the southeastern town of Al Oued, about 80 kilometres from the Tunisian border. Police narrowly missed capturing Tayeb early this week. He fled among palm trees to join his men, who opened fire on police before escaping. On Sunday night a patrol came under fire just north of Debila, a community northeast of Al Oued. Their vehicle was hit but police made no mention of casualties.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية "الراي"

Volume 16 Number 4868

AMMAN SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 1991, JUMADEH AL OULA 24, 1412

Price: Jordan 100 fils; Saudi Arabia 1.50 riyals; UAE 1.50 dirhams

King: Israeli leaders fear just peace since Arab cause is right

If peace efforts fail, results will not be limited to M.E. Jordan committed to democracy and people will be the final judge of their future

King calls for meetings at highest level among Arabs

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein said Friday Israel was adopting procrastination tactics in the peace process because of their leaders' fears of a just peace in the Middle East and that the Arab cause was just and had right on its side.

The King, in an interview on Middle East Broadcasting Corporation (MBC), also reaffirmed

his belief that the U.S. administration, particularly President George Bush and Secretary of State James Baker, were determined to achieve a just peace in the Middle East.

In the wide-ranging interview, the King reiterated Jordan's commitment to democracy despite problems and difficulties and vowed that there would not be

any reversal of the democratisation process. "The people will have the final say," he said.

The King warned that if the peace process does not produce a peace acceptable to the future generation, then frustration might lead the Middle East to brink of a disaster which will not be limited to the region but will affect the whole world.

The King expressed hope that Jordan's relations with some Arab countries, strained during the Gulf crisis, would be improved once the facts of the Jordanian position during the crisis become clear. He called for meetings between Arab leaders, "at the highest level," to remove differences in the interests of the Arab World at large.



Following is an unofficial translation of a transcript of the interview provided by MBC to the Jordan Times:

Q: Your Majesty, we have many questions. We want first to ask you about peace. We have noticed that Jordan was the first to accept the American invitation to Washington.

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U.N. should play full role in peace process, Jordan says

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein has sent a letter to the United Nations committee charged with helping the Palestinian people exercise their inalienable rights, calling for justice in the Middle East and help for the Palestinians regain their rights and usurped territory.

In his letter, sent on the Day of International Solidarity with the Palestinian People, King Hussein noted that the observation of the day this year coincides with a series of international developments of paramount importance unprecedented since the beginning of the Palestine problem.

The King said that last month witnessed the convening in Madrid of a Middle East peace conference sponsored by the two superpowers in order to implement U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338.

This conference, which has won unanimous world support, is aimed to bring about justice and a durable settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict and the restoration of Arab rights and lands, the King said.

In recognition of the importance of the Palestinian issue in

the Arab-Israeli conflict, the conference has opened the way for face-to-face negotiations between the Palestinian and the Israeli parties aiming to reach agreement in one year's time on a peaceful transitional process, enabling the Palestinians to exercise their natural rights of controlling their own internal affairs, the King said.

"Although we are satisfied with the positive developments in the Palestine problem following the easing of world tensions, we cannot be over-optimistic at this early stage," the King said. "It is true that the end of the cold war has enhanced the process of world peace, but Palestine problem is not solved yet and international legitimacy has not been implemented and the positive international developments have not been coupled with a change in the ideology of Israel towards the Arab-Israeli conflict," King Hussein said.

He said that while Arabs and Palestinians have responded favourably to the peace conference, Israel remains adamant and continues to adhere to its intransigence and refuses to recognise the Palestinian people's rights and rejects the idea of exchanging land for peace.

Israel is also pursuing its settlement policies in occupied lands despite the world's tendency to attain peace in the region, he added.

The King said that Israel seeks to keep the United Nations as a world organisation devoid of power in the peace-making process but the Arabs believe that the U.N. role should not remain marginal in this process.

The King said that the Security Council should remain the tool for implementing U.N. resolutions and therefore it should take control of the Palestine problem and assume the real responsibility of ensuring peace and stability based on international legitimacy.

He said that the U.N. should ensure the restoration of the Palestinian people's rights in their homeland.

The King called for international efforts to help the fulfilment of justice and peace and end Israel's occupation of Arab territories.

Arabiyat tipped for reelection as speaker

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — With only one day left before the Lower House deputies elect their speaker for their 1991-1992 session, all indicators point to the reelection of the incumbent, Abdul Latif Arabiyat.

With four candidates vying for the position, Dr. Arabiyat, the Muslim Brotherhood candidate, has the strongest chance of success, parliamentary observers noted Friday.

The three other candidates all refused to drop out of the race in favour of a coalition candidate and after inter-bloc consultations failed to produce a new alliance, some said "bad blood" had resulted.

"The Democratic Bloc, for example, is furious that the National Bloc did not agree to support their candidate and insisted on fielding its own candidate," said one observer. The National Bloc has received the support of the Democratic Bloc during the two last elections for the speaker and the latter expects to be repaid for its support.

"The gentlemen have agreed to disagree and the issue is not an ideological one but a personal one," is how one insider put it.

Abdul Majed Shureideh of the 17-member Constitution Bloc, Suleiman



Abdul Latif Arabiyat

Arar of the 16-member National Bloc and Faria Nabulsi of the nine-member Democratic Bloc all said they would stay in the race for speaker.

The Al Ra'i Arabic daily newspaper reported Friday the Constitution Bloc had decided to withdraw its candidate in favour of Dr. Arabiyat, but the bloc's spokesman, Fawzi Tuemeh, denied that such a decision had been made. A Constitution Bloc meeting Friday night, he said, resulted in a decision to "keep our candidate in the race."

"Who we vote for if our candidate does not make it through the first round of voting has not been decided," he said of the bloc's possible alliance during a second round of voting.

Parliamentary observers believe that there would be support from the Constitution Bloc for Dr. Arabiyat

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Palestinian team to head for U.S. regardless of Israeli stand

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Palestinian delegates and advisors to peace talks with Israel arrived in Amman Friday for coordination meetings with Jordanian officials and delegates ahead of their departure for Washington Monday and reaffirmed that they would be present in the U.S. capital on Dec. 4 ready for negotiations with the Jewish state whether or not the Israeli delegates turned up.

Sari Nusseibeh, a professor in philosophy and leading Palestinian activist, is the overall head of the team for the Washington talks instead of Fatah Hussein, "who led the Palestinians to the Oct. 30 opening in Madrid of the Middle East peace conference."

Palestinian officials explained that Mr. Hussein was staying back in occupied Jerusalem for local coordination and said Dr. Nusseibeh leading the delegation did in no way signal any rift in the Palestinian ranks. They pointed out that both Mr. Hussein and Dr. Nusseibeh were members of the Palestinian "guidance committee."

Comments made by Palestinian delegates and others highlighted that they were relishing the gain the Israelis gave them by attaching conditions and demands in their response to the American invitation to the Washington talks.

In an arrival statement, Hanan Ashrawi, spokesperson for the Palestinian delegation, said the Arabs

to the negotiations with Israel were going to Washington whether or not Israel accepts to go and Israel alone will take blame for aborting the peace process by rejecting the U.S. invitation.

Israel said initially that while it accepted Washington as the venue for the next round of bilateral talks, which were launched in Madrid, Dec. 4 was not an acceptable date. It suggested Dec. 9 but demanded that the talks move to the Middle East quickly after the Washington round.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir Friday signalled a change of heart and suggested that Israel might send a low-level advance team to Washington if the U.S. hosts suggested it as a means to break the deadlock (see separate story).

In her arrival comments, made before the Shamir statement, Dr. Ashrawi accused Israel of "trying to impose its will and conditions on international legitimacy" and asserted that the Jewish state was "isolating itself from international diplomacy and stood to lose a lot."

However, she added that she expected Israel to change its position to avert such isolation.

Hasid Abdul Shafi, head of the negotiating team, said meanwhile that the Palestinians would wait at the negotiating table until Israel showed up.

"If they are not going to come until the ninth (as Israel originally suggested) we are going to wait," Dr. Abdul Shafi, a physician from the occupied Gaza Strip, was quoted as

saying by Reuters. "We will go to the negotiating table and sit there and wait," he said.

Jordan, Lebanon, the Palestinians and Syria — the main four protagonists of Israel — all have agreed to go to Washington. The Syrian agreement was announced in Damascus by Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharras Thursday.

Political observers expected Israel, in what appears to be a gradual build-up to a serious confrontation with Washington over the issue, to shift its position and seek a face-saving formula. They saw Friday's Shamir statement as a definite step in this direction.

"The Palestinians affirmed that they would resist any Israeli pressure to shift the venue for talks to the Middle East without substantial progress in negotiations and would also demand a freeze in Israel's settlement activities in the occupied territories."

"They must stop building settlements," said Nabil Sharras, a senior advisor to Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat. "Without this we will not consider any progress has been made."

Dr. Shafi was quoted as saying by Reuters. Dr. Ashrawi echoed the words and said that "only when you have a situation of equilibrium and freedom" the Palestinians would agree to shifting the venue to the Middle East.

Dr. Abdul Shafi said he expected "difficult negotiations" with the

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Barzani holds talks in Baghdad

BAGHDAD (R) — Kurdish rebel leader Massoud Barzani held talks with senior Iraqi government figures on Friday, expected to cover fresh tension in northern Iraq and the slow pace of progress towards a new autonomy pact.

The Iraqi News Agency (INA) said Mr. Barzani met Izzat Ibrahim, vice-chairman of the ruling Revolution Command Council, Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz and Defence Minister Ali Hassan Al Majied.

A spokesman for Mr. Barzani's Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) in London said Thursday he hoped the talks would ease tension caused by an economic blockade it accuses Baghdad of clamping on the north.

INA gave no details of what Mr. Barzani discussed but it was the first time Iraq's official media had mentioned his current visit.

Mr. Barzani is co-leader with Jalal Talabani of the Iraqi Kurdistan Front, an umbrella group which has been discussing a new autonomy deal with Baghdad since government troops crushed a Kurdish rebellion in March this year.

Mr. Talabani, head of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), says a draft autonomy pact negotiated by Mr. Barzani fails to meet the minimum demands of Kurdish leaders.

These include large areas of land which Kurds claim as theirs, especially the oil-rich region around Kirkuk, which is outside the proposed autonomous region. Diplomats noted that the gov-

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Iraq recalls its effort, assails 'double standard'

BAGHDAD (R) — President Saddam Hussein complained Friday that the West was scrapping Iraq's most lethal weapons but allowed Israel to keep a nuclear arsenal.

The Iraqi leader said in a letter marking Palestinian solidarity day that the West had double standards towards the Middle East.

Iraq's chemical, nuclear, ballistic and biological weapons are being scrapped by United Nations experts under terms of the Gulf war ceasefire.

The presidential letter and commentaries in the official media reminded Iraq's 18 million people that Iraq tried in vain to link the Gulf crisis to a Middle East peace settlement and was now ignored in current U.S.-led

efforts to solve the conflict.

"What the Iraqi and Palestinian people face has shown the world the double standards of the USA and its allies in dealing with the resolutions and laws of the United Nations," the president said.

"There is an American and Western campaign trying to prevent the (Middle East) region from having even conventional weapons and an especially poisonous campaign against Iraq," said the letter, published in Al Thawra, organ of the ruling Baath Party.

"They allow the aggressive Zionist regime to keep all kinds of weapons of mass destruction, including an arsenal of nuclear weapons," he wrote.

Al Thawra recalled that on Aug. 12, 1990, Iraq made its offer to the West in the wake of its occupation of Kuwait.

"America rejected a link between the issues of the region, despite the fact that the whole world welcome President Saddam Hussein's initiative," it said.

It said Iraq had been punished by the Gulf war and subsequent U.N. sanctions "because Iraq provided the means and in balance that would allow the international community to establish a real peace."

President Saddam's letter accused the West of refusing to force Israel to implement United Nations resolutions ordering it to leave occupied Arab territories at the same time as it vigorously

enforced sanctions "and other unjust pressure" on Iraq.

He called on the world to maintain support for the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), denied a direct role in the Middle East peace talks which began in Madrid last month.

"We should support the Palestinian people and its struggle represented in the intifada, which expresses the rejection by the Palestinian people of the occupation and settlement policy of the Zionist entity," President Saddam said.

Al Thawra likened the Palestinian uprising of the spirit of the "mother of all battles," Iraq's term for the Gulf war.

"Iraq's blood has not yet dried and mingles with Palestinian blood which flows daily," it said.

Army quits barracks; Croatia agrees to U.N. troops

ZAGREB, Yugoslavia (R) — The Yugoslav army began withdrawing from two military bases in Croatia Friday after the rebel republic offered to allow United Nations peacekeepers into trouble spots on its soil.

The pullout from the bases in the Croatian capital Zagreb is crucial to the success of a truce after five months of fighting and the gesture by Croatian President Franjo Tudjman raised optimism before a visit by U.N. envoy Cyrus Vance.

Mr. Vance will arrive this weekend to try to forge an agreement between Serbia, Croatia and the Serbian-led federal army on how and where to deploy a U.N. peacekeeping force.

Hopes were also raised by a lull in fighting under the 14th ceasefire since Croatia declared independence from Yugoslavia in June and its Serbian minority

rebelled. Battles erupted only around Nova Gradiska and Lipik east of Zagreb.

A line of European Community (EC) monitors, Croatian police and a few bystanders watched as a convoy of 200 tank-tracked vehicles, lorries, jeeps and buses rumbled out of the Marshal Tito Barracks in Zagreb.

Some 135 army vehicles also left the Keresinec rocket base on the outskirts of the city and headed slowly south towards the republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Croatia's red and white chequered flag was quickly hoisted at the base.

"Today's convoy will serve as a test convoy," said Ed Koestel, spokesman for the EC monitors in Zagreb.

He said tanks and heavy weapons will be removed later Friday provided everything went

smoothly. All previous agreements to evacuate the barracks have broken down.

The army and Croatian officials were due to resume talks Friday on exchanging prisoners. The lifting of Croatian blockades of federal military bases on its territory is a key part of the U.N.-brokered ceasefire which came into force last Sunday.

The U.N. says it will send a peacekeeping force to Yugoslavia only if the truce holds and the warring sides agree how they should be deployed.

Mr. Tudjman reversed his position on Thursday night by saying Croatia would accept peacekeeping forces in crisis areas of the republic. He had previously said they should be posted only along its borders.

"The war in Croatia has become a world-scale problem and the consequence of this will be

the deployment of U.N. peacekeeping forces in the country," Mr. Tudjman said in a television interview.


"We simultaneously agreed that peacekeeping forces be deployed along Croatia's borders and in crisis areas where military operations are being waged."

Western diplomats said Mr. Tudjman appeared to have accepted he had no option but to let peacekeeping forces into flashpoints. His republic's forces have suffered a series of military setbacks and lost about one third of Croatia's territory.

"It was unreal to expect that they would be deployed only along republic borders because peacekeeping forces have never in any situation been used as mere border guards," said Hrvoje Kadic, head of the Croatian parliament's foreign policy commission.

Kurdish rebels vow 'hell' for Turkey

BAR ELIAS, Lebanon (R) — Kurdish rebels vowed on Friday to turn 1992 into "a year of hell" for the Turkish state. "We will step up military operations against the Turkish army until the Turks yield to the political solution," a senior aide to Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK) chief Abdullah Ocalan told thousands of Kurds in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley, site of a PKK training camp. "Operations will be continuous... the year 1992 will be a year of hell for the Turkish state," he told the rally in the town of Bar Elias 48 kilometres southeast of Beirut, to mark the 13th anniversary of the PKK's founding. Mr. Ocalan said in an interview published Thursday his guerrillas were no longer trying to establish an independent state in mainly Kurdish southeast Turkey. But he vowed to keep up the violent struggle unless the new coalition government in Ankara made concessions. "Through our long and hard struggle led by commander Ocalan we have reached this stage which we can call the stage of establishing the state," the PKK aide said, in apparent contrast to Mr. Ocalan's remarks. "Even if we wanted to, we could not break off from Turkey," Mr. Ocalan told the English-language Turkish Daily News. "We have 900 years of togetherness with Turkey."



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Syrian Jews stage pro-Assad march through Damascus

DAMASCUS (R) — Syrian Jews, carrying loyalty banners in Hebrew, English and Arabic, marched through Damascus on Friday to back President Hafez Al Assad, up for reelection.

It was the second pro-Assad rally in as many days by the capital's Jewish community, chiefly market traders and craftsmen.

Syrians have joined hundreds of large and small rallies day and night throughout the Arab state since Mr. Assad was nominated 12 days ago for a fourth seven-year term.

He is the only candidate in yes-or-no ballot on Dec. 2. A 2,000-strong column of Jews voiced praise for Mr. Assad as a great national leader.

The marchers, led by Ibrahim Hamra, chief of the Jewish community and grand rabbi, and members of the Jewish Council in Damascus hailed Mr. Assad's achievements by shouting slogans in Arabic with Damascene accents.

Over 400 children from the Jewish "Maymoun" school, carried pictures of Mr. Assad and coloured balloons and called out: "With our souls and blood we redeem these Hafez."

There are 3,000 Jews in Damascus, 850 in the northern city of Aleppo and some 150 in the northeastern city of Kamehshil on the Iraqi border. Damascus has 21 small synagogues.

Hundred of Damascus Jews demonstrated Wednesday night in support of Mr. Assad's reelection.

A noisy procession of at least 100 honking cars plastered with flags, posters and pictures of the president crawled down the old city's narrow Medhat Pasha Street to the Bab Sharki (Eastern Gate) in mid-evening.

Each car was jammed with people, including women, children and old people. Israel often complains that Syria's Jews are prevented from emigrating and says most would leave if they could. But Eli Khouri, one of Wednesday's demonstrators, asked whether he would go, said: "No, no. Maybe somebody but I don't know."

He said Syrian Jews were able to travel abroad, but like other Syrians, forbidden to visit Israel. The demonstrators on Friday marched through Old Damascus from the Jewish Al Ameen district in the eastern sector to other areas populated with Christian and Muslim communities.

People there joined the demonstrators, bringing the number of marchers to over 4,000. They were festooned with rice and flowers thrown by wellwishers from balconies.

Chief Rabbi Hamra shouted with other demonstrators: "Hafez Assad is the symbol of national unity."

He told reporters Syria's Jews had benefited from many accomplishments during Mr. Assad's rule.

"The Jewish community will say yes to President Assad on Dec. 2."

"Whatever we do for President

Assad is not enough. Today is Friday and it is a day to prepare for the holy day (Sabbath) but we went ahead with the rally to express our gratitude to the president who gave us a lot," Rabbi Hamra said.

Lawyer Shehadi Al Kouri said: "President Assad gave us a lot and lifted all restrictions which were imposed on us and made us equal with all other citizens."

"We are treated exactly like all Syrians. Assad has strengthened our belonging to the nation because we are Jewish Arabs and we are proud that we are Arabs and Jewish Syrians."

During the three-hour demonstration, the Jewish marchers shouted slogans like: "The Jewish district is our district. Hafez Assad is our leader. Judaism is great."

"The Jewish youth support peace. Support the hero of peace and the hero of Golan (Heights)."

One English banner said: "All love and respect to the great President Hafez Al Assad (from) the Jewish community in Syria."

Banners in Hebrew said: "With one voice, one heart we say yes to President Hafez Al Assad" and "Love and honour to the great leader Hafez Al Assad."

Antoin Bazon, a principal of the Maymoun School, said his school has kindergarten, elementary and preparatory sections and is demanding a high school section. It teaches the same curriculum as state schools, plus two hours a week on the Jewish religious texts.

King: Israeli leaders fear peace

(Continued from page 5)

continue forward guarded by all. The people will be the judge. It has been noted in the last three to four months that in the political map of Jordan there is a change. There is a distancing from radicalism and a return to reason. How do you explain that?

At Democratic practice on its own is one of the reasons that led to such results. This, by the way, is not new to us. We have been through this in the fifties but certain circumstances did not allow continuation. Then there was occupation. The people, any people, know their responsibility. They contribute and build.

Q: According to your letter of appointment to the prime minister, alleviating economic hardship on the people will be a priority. What is the economic situation?

A: Within our means we will have to deal with the situation. This is not only the responsibility of the government but also of all people. For regard other economic problems we might need support from many in this world and especially from our Arab brothers. Israel is being supported continuously while we have suffered from all what befall Palestine. It all reflects on us, especially the return of 300,000 people to Jordan so far. Once more, those who follow Jordan and its circumstances, its responsibilities and obligations and the challenges we face should perhaps change their mind.

Q: You know that MBC broadcast to the Gulf states. Would you like to say a word for Jordanians abroad?

A: I am very proud of our brothers and family and of their achievements. I hope they continue to be good ambassadors for Jordan abroad. They are all our love, appreciation and pride.

remained within the confines of its position that no PLO members "will be" granted visas to accompany the negotiators, observers noted.

No American comment was immediately available.

PLO officials have affirmed that the organisation's quest for visas for the advisors was separate from efforts to resume the suspended dialogue between Washington and the PLO.

The dialogue began in December 1989, when Mr. Arafat recognised the state of Israel and renounced terrorism. He was helped in July 1991 when the PLO leadership left short of meeting American conditions that the organisation take punitive measures against the leader of a PLO faction which carried out an aborted raid at a Tel Aviv beach.

At a Palestine National Council session in September, Mohammad Abbas, head of the Palestine Liberation Front which carried out the raid, was excluded from the PLO Executive Committee and since then the PLO leadership has been urging Washington to resume the dialogue.

But the administration refuses the PLO overtures, apparently because of fears that a resumption of dialogue with the PLO might antagonise Israel, which rejects any dealing with the organisation, and throw a spanner in the works of the Middle East peace process.

Dr. Abdul Shafi was quoted as saying in an interview with the daily Al Sharq Al Awsat, published in Cairo and London, that he was a loyal member of the PLO.

"Everybody knows that our loyalty is to our legitimate leadership, which is the liberation organisation," he said.

A similar declaration by Dr. Erekat before the first round of talks in Madrid drew an Israeli threat that it would not sit down with a declared member of the PLO.

Asked if he was an official PLO member, Dr. Abdul Shafi replied: "Of course, I was there from the beginning at the founding conference of the organisation in 1967."

He said he had not taken part in meetings of the PNC, after the Israelis occupied the West Bank in 1967.

"I am in spirit, of course, a member in the liberation organisation and a member of the national council," Dr. Abdul Shafi said.

He said the Palestinian delegation would propose at the peace talks that PNC members in the occupied territories should be allowed to "exercise their powers as members of the national council."

The Israeli press reported the U.S. was concerned that peace efforts were in jeopardy because of Israel's stand.

The main headline in Maariv newspaper read: "Washington: Peace process will collapse if Israel continues its stubbornness."

Mr. Shamir said he thought a collapse of the peace process was unlikely.

But he said that "we are taking into account" a possible public relations fiasco conjured by the prospect of Arab delegations facing empty Israeli chairs in Washington.

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Arabiyat tipped for reelection

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because of the alliance drawn between the Brotherhood Bloc and the Constitution Bloc against the government of Taher Masihi who resigned two weeks ago. The two blocs had signed a petition in mid-October calling on Mr. Masihi to resign.

While the Brotherhood Bloc as well as the Democratic Bloc have popular support as political groupings, the National and Constitution blocs are both coalitions of independent liberal, conservative and right-wing political figures.

The split-up of votes is expected to transcend ideological lines and give way to personal rivalries and political vendettas which might give way to a lot of abstentions during the second round of the voting.

One scenario that was brought up by several analysts was that the second round would be similar to the last election for the speakership.

"The National Bloc will get the votes of the independent Islamists which is a coalition of two groups of three deputies each and will thus defeat the Constitution Bloc deputy in the first round," said one insider.

"During the second round the 17-member Constitution Bloc will support the Brotherhood candidate, the Democratic Bloc will abstain from voting and Dr. Arabiyat will be re-elected," he predicted.

crumpled approved legislation this week allowing anyone to buy land in Kirkuk. Previously it was reserved for Iraqis of Arab origin and the move was seen as a concession to the Kurds.

But it also follows weeks of renewed tension between the Kurds and the Iraqi army, and the slaughter of 60 army prisoners by the Kurds at the town of Sulaimaniyah in October.

Kurdish leaders say they are slowly being starved of food, fuel and supplies to twist their arms to sign the autonomy agreement which has been under discussion since May.

They also accused Baghdad of preparing an assault on the key rebel-held town of Erbil and of sending 18,000 troops backed by artillery and tanks to the region.

The Iraqi government has not replied to the charges.

More than a million Kurds fled their homes when their post-Gulf war rebellion was crushed and are only drifting back from shelters in Iran and Turkey under the protection of the United Nations.

The U.N. envoy overseeing relief efforts in the Gulf, Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, left Baghdad at the weekend after securing its agreement to renew a pact allowing U.N. relief agencies to operate throughout the country for another six months.

NATO powers have also established a small rapid deployment force in Turkey following Western public outrage at their plight in the harsh climate of the border mountains in the spring.

Mr. Shamir's irritation with the United States' refusal to delay the talks was evident Friday.

"It is the United States' right as an honest broker to try to remove all obstacles to the peace process, but not beyond this," he said.

Mr. Shamir said despite U.S. assurances that there was no tilt toward the Arabs, the Arab parties thought there was and thus concentrated their efforts on persuading the United States to pressure Israel, rather than negotiating with the Jewish state.

"That is more or less the essential difficulty of this stage of negotiations," Mr. Shamir said.

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(Continued from page 1)

crumpled approved legislation this week allowing anyone to buy land in Kirkuk. Previously it was reserved for Iraqis of Arab origin and the move was seen as a concession to the Kurds.

But it also follows weeks of renewed tension between the Kurds and the Iraqi army, and the slaughter of 60 army prisoners by the Kurds at the town of Sulaimaniyah in October.

Kurdish leaders say they are slowly being starved of food, fuel and supplies to twist their arms to sign the autonomy agreement which has been under discussion since May.

They also accused Baghdad of preparing an assault on the key rebel-held town of Erbil and of sending 18,000 troops backed by artillery and tanks to the region.

The Iraqi government has not replied to the charges.

More than a million Kurds fled their homes when their post-Gulf war rebellion was crushed and are only drifting back from shelters in Iran and Turkey under the protection of the United Nations.

The U.N. envoy overseeing relief efforts in the Gulf, Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, left Baghdad at the weekend after securing its agreement to renew a pact allowing U.N. relief agencies to operate throughout the country for another six months.

NATO powers have also established a small rapid deployment force in Turkey following Western public outrage at their plight in the harsh climate of the border mountains in the spring.

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Cooperation needed to address homeless problem, officials say

AMMAN (J.T.) — The problem of homelessness in Jordan came under scrutiny by a symposium organized by the National Society for the Protection of the Homeless (NSPH) Thursday in cooperation with the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS).

GUVS Executive President Abdullah Al Khatib painted a gloomy picture of the situation when he said that the country has a large number of homeless people, beggars and vagabonds, but cannot determine their numbers and has no effective plans to deal with the situation.

Dr. Khatib said that Jordan needs sound scientific measures to deal with this problem, which is affecting the very fabric of the Jordanian society.

Dr. Khatib attributed the emergence of the homelessness phenomenon to the socio-economic changes in the Kingdom which led to many cases of loose social ties. GUVS, he said, has been working to deal with questions related to poverty and homelessness.

One way of dealing with the problem was through direct advice to the families and relatives and the homeless people.

Another way to deal with the problem is through opening special institutions that offer care and shelter to homeless people.

He said that GUVS was contributing to the solution of this

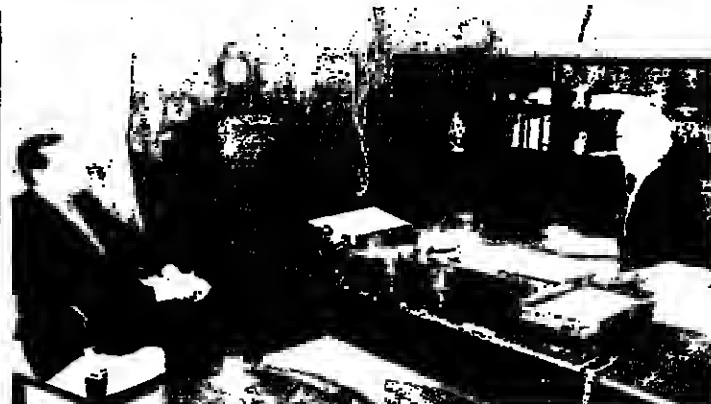
problem to prevent juvenile delinquency and to open the way for the young to have new opportunities in life.

The meetings were opened by Minister of Social Development Amin Mashagbeh, who said that no laws or penalties can be effective in dealing with the homeless, beggars or the unemployed unless proper effective socio economic and educational systems cooperate to deal with the situation.

The Ministry of Social Development has been cooperating with GUVS in dealing with this problem, the minister noted. So far, the ministry has entrusted 60 homeless people to the care of GUVS and offered GUVS JD 50,000 annually to take charge of this task.

At the same time, the ministry, in cooperation with the police, has been collecting beggars and homeless people from the streets in daily campaigns to conduct studies on their conditions and provide them with the appropriate care, Dr. Mashagbeh said.

NSPH President Dr. Sari Nasser addressed the meeting by echoing Dr. Khatib's views about the need of collective measures to deal with the problem. He said that Jordan cannot deal with this issue unless various segments of society cooperate with the state in implementing plans that would end the phenomenon on streets of Jordan.



His Majesty King Hussein visits Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker to give him additional Royal directives (Petra photo).

King visits prime minister, outlines his expectations

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein paid a visit to Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker at his office and provided him with Royal directives over a number of local, pan-Arab and international questions. The King also heard from the prime minister outline the new government's steps to put into force the Royal directives contained in a letter to the government at the domestic and external fronts.

Following the visit, it was announced that the King's letter to the government will be considered as its policy statement to Parliament.

A statement said that the Higher Council for the Interpretation

of the Constitution said that it has been decided that the King's letter sent to Sharif Zeid upon forming his government on Nov. 21 will be considered as the government statement for which a vote of confidence will be sought from Parliament in its new session opening Sunday.

In accordance with the articles of the Constitution, a new government should submit its statement within one month after being formed in order to win confidence from Parliament. But under the Constitution, the King's letter to the new government can be considered as a government policy statement should the government be formed when the Parliament is in recess.

Further tightening of blockade against Iraq indicates existence of 'blacklist', officials say

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordanian importers for foodstuff for consumption in the Kingdom as well as Iraq stand to suffer drastically from what appears to be a further tightening of the enforcement of the international sanctions against Iraq, according to shipping officials and businessmen.

Particularly affected by a new measure being enforced by the American-led naval fleet patrolling the Red Sea are bulk cargo carriers loaded with rice, sugar and flour, which are intercepted and subjected to "unreasonable" procedures and regulations, shipping officials and importers say.

The Shipping Agents Association (SAA) of Jordan is cautioning importers that their cargo "is subject to be refused (entry to Aqaba) according to this new implementation of the inspection rules."

The latest vessel to fall victim to the enforcers of the sanctions against Iraq was

M.V. Petra Slaveiko, a Bulgarian ship loaded with 9,500 metric tonnes of rice imported by a Jordanian firm. The ship was intercepted on Nov. 23 by the U.S. naval forces at the Tiran Straits on the mouth of the Gulf of Aqaba and was refused entry to the port on grounds that cargo in the lower hold was not accessible to the inspectors.

The vessel was delayed for three days at sea during which its crew made access to its lower holds through ventilation pipes and the inspectors allowed it to proceed after a second inspection, according to SAA officials.

On-board inspection of vessels at sea — including access to lower holds full of bulk products — is described as an almost impossible task by shipping experts, who also pointed out that vessels would be deprived of one third of their full cargo capacity if they were to make room for accessibility for inspection.

Paradoxically, five other vessels loaded with similar cargo

— mostly sugar and rice — were allowed to proceed without hassle to Aqaba in the past two weeks. This has added further credence to an assertion by Jordanian importers that the U.S. fleet in the Red Sea is keeping a "black list" of Jordanian firms whose the enforcers suspect of importing goods for Iraq. Imports of the "blacklisted" companies are blocked while cargo consigned to "non-blacklisted" importers is allowed to proceed, according to the businessmen.

M.V. Calangreni, a Romanian vessel carrying 7,470 tonnes of rice for Iraq, was turned away from Aqaba on Nov. 10 despite its possession of a certificate from the U.N. Sanctions Committee that its cargo was approved by the panel under Security Council Resolution 687, which exempts foodstuff and medicine from the embargo on Iraq.

The vessel is now transferring part of its load to another ship at Port Suez and both carriers are expected to proceed to Aqaba together after

meeting the "lower hold accessibility demand" of the enforcers.

The net result of the delay is an additional cost, which will reflect on the consumer price for the product in the market, businessmen point out.

"There is a certain range of international price for commodities," noted one importer. "We try to work within that range, keeping limited profit margins, but additional shipping costs will not only erode our profits but will cause heavy losses," he said.

"The message we get from the interceptors and delays is simple: don't import anything for Iraq unless you want to lose or make the Iraqis pay high costs for their needs."

But the "message" may not be that simple, adds another importer who exclusively deals with the Jordanian market. "Imports for the local market are also incurring the additional cost and the net victim who will pay the extra cost and thus a higher price is the Jordanian consumer."

Officials alarmed by rising dropout rate in country

By Nur Sati

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Increasingly, Jordan's motorists are finding that stopping at a red light means being approached by children selling gum or other trinkets. The phenomenon, while not new, is indicative of the growing numbers of children who are dropping out of school.

Most of the children interviewed by the Jordan Times said they were forced to drop out of school to support their families, which are being hit by the weak economic conditions in the country.

Education officials, alarmed at the increasing dropout rate in the Kingdom, are conducting studies to determine the exact causes behind rising dropout rate.

According to statistics from the Higher Council for Science and Technology (HCST), the dropout rate for schools in first grade is about 1.7 per cent. This figure increased to 3 per cent for students between the second and sixth grades. After the sixth grade, the dropout rate for students doubled to 6 per cent in the 1989-1990 academic year, according to HCST statistics.

At the twelfth level, the average dropout rate among literary art students is 36 per cent, 10 per cent higher than the one for science students.

Deir Alla Directorate was found to have the highest drop out rate, which stands at about 17.7 per cent in the ninth grade alone, officials said.

Dr. Victor Billeh, president of the National Centre for Educational Research and Development at the HCST, said that the figures do not tell the whole picture. There is no way to know how many students dropped out in the shuffle as they transferred from schools in one directorate to another, he said.

However slightly distorted the figures may be, "we still consider the dropout levels high," Dr. Billeh told the Jordan Times.

One possible reason for the high dropout rate could be the large number of small schools in Jordan, he said.

"There are 260 government schools in Jordan with less than 40 students. There are 844 schools with less than 130 students in each school and some 1,267 schools with less than 220 students," Dr. Billeh said.

In the distribution for the limited educational resources available in the country, small schools are sometimes overlooked, he said. "The smaller the schools, the less facilities it will have," Dr. Billeh said. "The kind of education that can be provided for is limited whereas if the school is bigger

with better facilities (libraries and labs) there will ultimately be a better educational atmosphere."

Echoing Dr. Billeh's views, the general director of the Education Department at the Ministry of Education, Dr. Zougan Obeidat, said, "the educational system is efficient, we would rarely find any dropouts."

He attributed the high dropout rates to discrepancies in the educational system. "It is an aspect of our failure in keeping all the students in our schools," Dr. Zougan said. "When the student drops out, it means there is something wrong in the system."

Another reason could be the lack of qualified teachers, officials maintain. But a more significant reason may be the social aspect.

"If parents find children failing their class consecutively, it might give them (parents) the incentive to force their children out of school," according to Dr. Zougan.

Some street children interviewed by the Jordan Times said that they are forced to work not because their grades might be poor, but because the family needs an income earner.

"I left school when I was six years old because my mother needed us (children) to work

so that we could eat. It has been three years since I started selling chewing gum," said a nine-year-old boy, who added that he enjoyed street life and being out of school.

The problem poses an ironic problem for government officials trying to increase the country's literacy rate. While older adults are increasingly encouraged to enroll in adult school to learn how to read and write, certain conditions continue to force children to go without a formal education.

In the meantime, officials continue to research the problem, hoping to pinpoint the reason for the high dropout rate.

The National Centre for Educational Research and Development is still in the process of completing its study, which looks in-depth into the reasons for the high dropout rates. "We will also look at the rates with respect to locations — comparing the rates of the urban and rural setting," Dr. Billeh said.

The study will also take into consideration the mobility of the population. "Only once we have analysed and found indicators and pinpointed the dimension of the problem can we look into the causes for such a phenomenon and seek measures," Dr. Billeh said.

CAEU to review report, assess financial state

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan will take part in the 54th session of the Council of Arab Economic Unity's (CAEU), Ministerial Council due to convene in Cairo on Dec. 1.

Participants will discuss the executive steps to move the Council's headquarters to Cairo in implementation of a resolution passed by the 10th extraordinary session, and the financial and administrative situations of the Council.

The CAEU secretary general, Hassan Ibrahim, left Amman for Cairo to head the session and the meeting of the deputy representatives, which will start Sunday.

In a departure statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Mr. Ibrahim said participants will discuss the secretary general's annual report on the most important Arab and international factors which affected the performance of Arab economies. They will also discuss the international economic conditions and the external debt of the developing countries, which is at the forefront of the problems plaguing these countries.

The annual economic report also talks about problems facing Arab economies, which have been struggling to cope with a new situation, placing the development policies and strategies at a difficult junction.

Europarlamentarians arrive in Jordan

AMMAN (J.T.) — A delegation representing the Socialist group at the European Parliament, headed by Claude Cheysson, Friday arrived in Amman from the occupied West Bank on a three day visit to Jordan for talks with Jordanian officials on issues of mutual interest. In an arrival statement, Mr. Cheysson expressed his happiness for visiting Jordan, saying that it was not his first visit to the Kingdom. He added that the group will discuss with Jordanian officials issues of common concern, including the peace process and scopes of cooperation in the parliamentary and economic fields.

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His Royal Highness Prince Faisal Ben Al Hussein distributes awards to organizers of a conference on fodder processing and livestock wealth in the Arab World (Petra photo).

Conference calls on Arab countries to support Palestinians

AMMAN (J.T.) — A three-day pan-Arab conference on fodder processing and boosting the livestock wealth of the Arab World ended in Amman with a call on Arab countries to extend financial and in-kind assistance to the Palestinian people to allow them to boost their agricultural production and enhance their resistance to the occupation.

The conference, which was held under the patronage of His Royal Highness Prince Faisal Ben Al Hussein, called on Arab states to provide training to the Palestinians in fodder processing measures, help them set up laboratories for testing the quality of animal feed and to increase trade exchanges with the Arab lands occupied by Israel.

The delegates also voiced their support to the Iraqi people and called for an end of the food embargo on Iraq. They also called for providing the Iraqi people with the food and medicine and means of producing fodder and food production.

The conference voiced total support for the Libyan people in the face of current Western threats over the 1988 downing of a Pan-Am aircraft over Scotland, which was blamed on Libya.

The conference, which was organized by the Arab Federation for Food Industries (AFFI) in cooperation with the Jordan Cooperative Organisation (JCO), was attended by representatives

of Arab universities, chambers of agriculture, industry and trade as well as the ministries of industry, supply and trade in the Arab World.

The recommendations included a call on Arab nations to give due attention to natural pasture lands and to stem the cutting of forest trees to protect the soil from erosion and ensure basic services to people involved in pasture lands.

The conference appealed to governments and money lending institutions and funds as well as investors to give attention to and encourage agricultural production. It also urged governments to lease state-owned lands to farmers for nominal fees to encourage food production.

The conference urged Arab

universities and research centres to give due attention to the production of fodder and on governments to create proper facilities to store strategic amounts of fodder, give due attention to the poultry industry and to finance the creation of silos.

The delegates urged the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company (JPMC) to speed up work on the production of calcium phosphate used in fodder processing and encouraged Arab investors to initiate joint ventures that would ensure sufficient fodder for the livestock wealth of the Arab World.

Prince Faisal, who presided over the final session, distributed awards to a number of prominent people who helped organize the conference in recognition of their efforts.

Youth congress ends; stresses understanding, friendship among young

By Serene Hakala
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath chaired the final session of the first International Youth Congress held at the Amman Baccalaureate School Thursday.

The congress, an event organized by the student body at the Baccalaureate School, extended invitations to students around the world in an effort to create better understanding and to promote peace and friendship among the students, especially following the disastrous results of the Gulf war on the region. The students thus decided that peace would be the main theme of the congress and adopted the motto of "Uniting a Divided World."

The congress, which lasted for six days, hosted a number of speakers including His Royal Highness Crown Prince

Hassan, Dr. Kamal Salibi, Dr. Farouk El Baz and the British ambassador to Jordan, Patrick Eyres.

In her address, Her Royal Highness thanked the participants and organizers for their efforts in making this event possible. She also expressed hope that topics discussed during the workshops have benefited and helped students to better understand problems facing the world.

Her Highness then presented the students with a collection of books featuring Jordan's achievements under the reign of His Majesty King Hussein.

Also speaking at the final session, Mr. Eyres, who did not speak on behalf of the European Community (EC), but rather as a European citizen, gave a speech about Europe's view on the Middle East peace process.

In his speech, Mr. Eyres highlighted the importance of the peace process carried in Europe, and that continent's keen desire to see a stable Middle East where justice and human rights prevail.

Mr. Eyres also spoke of economic, social and political ties between Europe and the Middle East. He said that his country and the European Community look for peace based on the "rule of law" and principles enshrined in the U.N. Charter, which does not accept the changing of frontiers by force and guarantees the right of self-determination and self-defence to all people.

Mr. Eyres added that the guiding principles for the current peace process, U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338, reflect the land for peace formula. He also recognized the right of every state to live within secure and recognised boundaries and

the right of Palestinians to self-determination.

Following his speech, the ambassador was bombarded with a barrage of what some thought were "hostile" questions. Students and attendees questioned the ambassador on what they believed to be a double standard in dealing with the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait and the 24-year-old Israeli occupation of Arab territories.

The ambassador insisted that there were main differences between the two occupations. Iraq, he said, invaded a sovereign nation while in the case of the occupied territories, it was a bit unclear because both sides were guilty of committing aggression.

The congress, which discussed a number of other issues such as education, health, and the environment, adopted a number of resolutions that will be announced in a few days.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

King swears in ministers

AMMAN (Petra) — Three ministers who were abroad when the new government of Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker was formed were sworn on Thursday before His Majesty King Hussein. The new ministers are Yanal Hikmat as minister of tourism and antiquities, Jawdat Al Shoul as minister of interior and Mahmoud Al Sharif as minister of information. Attending the swearing in ceremony were Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, Chief of the Royal Court Adnan Abu Odeh and the King's Military Secretary His Royal Highness Prince Talal Ben Mohammad.

King receives message from Yemen

AMMAN (J.T.) — A special envoy from Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh left Amman Friday after delivering a message to His Majesty King Hussein from the Yemeni president. The envoy, Seif Sayel, who is also member of Yemen's Consultative Council, was received by the King at the Royal Court Thursday afternoon. The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said that the message dealt with current political developments in the Arab region and Jordanian-Yemeni relations.

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دائرة العطاءات الحكومية
MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS & HOUSING
GOVERNMENT TENDERS DIRECTORATE

Announcement for Central Tender No. (153/91)
Implementation of Digital IDR/DCME System (Turnkey Project)

The Government Tenders Directorate of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan announces the above mentioned tender for the implementation of IDR/DCME system at IntelSat Baqa Earth Station, in accordance with the conditions and specifications stated in the tendering documents, which makes use of low rate encoding and digital speech interpolation to enable deriving four terrestrial channels from one satellite bearer channel. The Telecommunications Corporation of Jordan (TCC) will be the responsible organization for the implementation of this project. Interested tenderers, specialised in the field of telecommunications, are invited to purchase the tendering documents from:

Government Tenders Directorate
Ministry of Public Works and Housing
P.O.Box (1228)
Amman - Jordan
Tele: 21944
Fax (884758)

Starting on 30/11/1991, against a non-refundable price of JD 150.
Last date for purchasing tender documents shall be on 18/2/1992.
The tender, accompanied by a tender security, shall be delivered, by post or otherwise, to reach the Government Tenders Directorate not later than 13:30 noon on Saturday Feb. 23, 1992.
The tenders shall be opened in the presence of tenderers' representatives, who may choose to attend, at 14:00 p.m. on 29/2/1992.

Chairman Central Tender Committee
Eng. Basheer Al Jahbeer

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation
Established 1975

الموقف الجordanية السياسية المستقلة المنشور بالانجليزية من المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية

Chairman of the Board of Directors:
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Editorial and advertising offices:
Jordan Press Foundation,
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

Telephones: 667171/6, 670141-4

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Facsimile: 661242

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.
Subscription and advertising rates are available from the
Jordan Times advertising department.

Depending on Bush's fortitude

THE Middle East back-stage diplomacy since the Madrid conference, hampered by James Baker's recent absence from Washington, has aroused speculation which is often misleading. Yet one thing is certain: Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir is determined to recover from the unquestionable political reverse that Israel suffered from the Palestinians at Madrid. He may lack charm and charisma but he has plenty of cunning and he still has strong cards even if they are not as strong as they were. He is a master of appearing reasonable while remaining intransigent. He will continue to say that everything can be discussed in Middle East peace talks as if this means that they can be negotiated, which it does not. His success at deception apparently includes Israeli voters, as opinion polls show that while a remarkable 74 per cent favour the exchange of territory for peace they are also swinging towards the Likud.

Shamir's lengthy visit to the United States was intended both to rally American Zionist forces after their recent set-back and restore the strained relations with the Bush administration. While it remains to be seen how far these two aims are compatible, he must see some trends as favourable. President Bush's previously unassailable position, based on his world statesmanship, is threatened by alarming domestic difficulties. For the first time the possibility that he might be defeated by a Democrat in 1992 is taken seriously and the president is showing signs of loss of nerve. Following the shattering reverse in the Pennsylvania by-election, Republican members of Congress are more than ever anxious for AIPAC support for their campaign funds. However, Shamir's weakness is that the very economic difficulties which are damaging President Bush make the gigantic financial aid he is demanding more unpopular with the U.S. public, who are more inclined than previously to make the necessary concession.

However in the short term, it is important that Shamir faces an unusually critical administration in Washington. As a venue for bilateral talks with Arab delegations he would marginally prefer the U.S. capital to Madrid, but it would still attract a vast world audience which is likely to be no less sceptical towards Israel's negotiators than in Spain. Mr. Shamir's best hopes remain with the attitude of the Palestinians even if these were belied by their skilled performance in Madrid. The temptation is strong for the PLO to harden its terms for continuing cooperation with Mr. Baker. It is quite logical to expect a resumption of the dialogue between Washington and Tunis. But logic has not been the criterion in any of the moves to initiate the peace process in the first place. It is of far greater significance that the Bush administration has shown beyond question that it is ready to be tough with Shamir in matters of real importance. Baker's firm attitude prevented the Israelis from walking out of the Madrid conference on more than one occasion. This has now been confirmed by the Israeli government's decision not to prosecute Dr. Haneen Ashrawi for her PLO contacts.

Israel can still hope that some new stricture on the Palestinians' choice of negotiators will cause them to boycott the second phase. But having shown so much forbearance until now, the PLO must not let themselves be lured into an Israeli trap. The crucial fact is that Shamir was forced to go to the Madrid conference against his will and if he cannot now divert the peace process into more favourable channels he will prefer to block it altogether — provided, as always, he is not clearly seen to be responsible. But this may no longer be easy and it is up to the Palestinians to see that it is impossible — Middle East International, London.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

JORDAN UNIVERSITY of Science and Technology, in the north, is not merely a university, it is rather an accomplishment by the Jordanian community under the leadership of His Majesty King Hussein, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily. The paper said that under the direction of King Hussein, scientists, officials and technicians have cooperated to bring this great edifice and institute into being in order to offer a qualitative service to the new generation. The paper said that the King and the Jordanian people take pride in this great achievement and have reason to be delighted over the commencement of its operations and activities. King Hussein was warmly welcomed by the people of Ramtha, where the university is situated, and they were overjoyed for meeting with their leader and deeply gratified over his endeavour to serve his nation through providing educational facilities of such prominence and magnitude, the paper added. With such accomplishments, Jordan is proud to rise to the needs of educational developments and through the university staff and administrators it is hoped that the dream of the new generation will come true, said the daily. The paper said that with the new achievement, the Jordanians will find a new incentive and motive for forging ahead with even greater accomplishments designed to attain further progress.

A columnist in Al Ra'i daily criticised the current attempts to deal with the symptoms of the economic ills and not with the chronic problems which caused the illness. Fahd Al Fneak said that the allocation of JD 35 million to distribute to the poor or the unemployed, as a government official had suggested, can by no means end the chronic issue or terminate unemployment and poverty in Jordan. The writer said cosmetic surgery can only offer temporary relief but no permanent solution. It is like giving aspirin to a patient with high fever due to an inflammation to serve as a sedative and make him go to sleep without removing the cause of the illness, the writer added. He said one has to look behind the weaknesses and the real illness in the economic structure and try to reform the situation to pave the ground for the complete removal of the illness. Combating poverty, he said, requires an increase in the domestic product and equitable distribution for all citizens, while combating unemployment requires the creation of income-generating projects and jobs for the unemployed, this can come through new investments and giving the private sector a free hand in enterprise, the writer stressed. The real cure will take some time, the writer said, but if the prescription is followed to the end, the cure is assured and conditions are bound to improve.

After Madrid, tougher conditions for a land-for-peace deal

By Emma Murphy

ON Sept. 23, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir attended a ceremony marking the founding of the Tzur Yigal settlement on the border between Israel and the West Bank, the Green Line. Mr. Shamir stated categorically that "with the establishment of this settlement, we are saying that we must settle and settle, and that the dream will always be that all the territories are ours." This settlement is one of many which, according to Ariel Sharon's Star Plan, are intended to erase the reality of the Green Line. The Palestinian centres of population are being strangled, squashed increasingly into isolated pockets of land, surrounded on all sides by rapidly growing settlements of Zionist zealots.

Meanwhile, on the final day of the Madrid talks, Israel further demonstrated its "desire for peace" by formally establishing a new civilian settlement, Kela, on the Golan Heights, with Housing Minister Ariel Sharon declaring that the Golan would never be returned to Syria.

It appears that the Israeli government is fundamentally opposed to any territorial compromise or withdrawal. However Israeli officials in Madrid tried to dress up their intransigence, the fact remains that they have nothing to offer in any peace talks, other than their own brand of "personal autonomy" for those Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

If there is so little to be gained by Palestinians, why should they then appear so eager to engage the Israelis in this dialogue? Clashes in the West Bank and Gaza between Fatah on the one hand and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) and Hamas on the other are proof that the Palestinians themselves are divided on this issue. Madrid committed them to go along with Secretary of State James Baker's tactics, not to say joint strategies with the Syrians which hold a considerable degree of unpredictability. It may well be that a deal was made whereby Syria played tough to the Palestinians' readiness to do a deal, presenting both faces of the Arab card in what became for the Palestinian team a significant public relations success. Nevertheless, the whole set-up reflected the Palestinian dependence upon its Arab allies and a corresponding lack of any meaningful autonomous bargaining power.

The positive outcomes

Whatever the doubts regarding attendance of the conference, however, it is in retrospect possible to assume certain positive outcomes.

Most important, the fact has been established that the Palestinians are a legitimate and vital party to any peace negotiations. Unlike Camp David, which assumed that Egypt could bargain on the Palestinians' behalf, Madrid

has set the precedent that the Palestinians can and must negotiate for themselves. All the Israeli obstinacy about including known Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) sympathisers cannot change the fact that everybody knows this is de facto a PLO delegation. Binyamin Begin, an aspiring successor to Mr. Shamir, may think that this represents "the first signs of the creation of an alternative leadership to the PLO," but the reality is that, while the balance of power may be moving in favour of middle-class intellectuals from inside the territories, and away from the leadership in Tunis, the level of cooperation and consultation between the two has so far indicated a unifying rather than divisive trend. This may even be interpreted as a positive reassertion of links between the territories and the diaspora in contrast to the differences made apparently by the intifada. This is not to deny that the Palestinian delegation must remain aware of the potential political advantage to be gained by Israel if any sign of disagreement between themselves and Yasser Arafat should appear.

Reports came from Madrid of further talks which will separate the Palestinian from the Jordanian delegates, reinforcing the apparent "arrival" of the Palestinians as a separate entity on the regional scene. This was denied by Mr. Shamir once he was back in Israel, although he conceded that delegates from each side would deal with issues directly

relating to themselves when they arose, within the context of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. The significance of Israel having distinguished between Palestinians and Jordan is tremendous, even so.

Having come in from the cold, the Palestinian delegation presented an impressive public relations effort. With equal press coverage guaranteed, the Palestinians appeared to be the most dignified, calm, moderate and articulate of all parties concerned and the Israelis were correspondingly hard put to appear as anything other than difficult, uncompromising and, dare one say it, rather short of women delegates. This kind of international exposure dispels images of gun-toting terrorists and emphasises the victim status of the Palestinians in contrast to the security risk images which Israel wishes to project. The televised scenes of youths waving olive branches in the territories, subsequently being arrested by Israeli soldiers for illegally demonstrating, only served to underline this.

For the American government, the Palestinians proved to be the least awkward and most constructive delegation, highlighting the contrast with Israeli diffidence and making the U.S.-Palestinian dialogue one which the Americans will find it difficult to walk away from.

An Israeli acknowledgement

Ultimately, however, the solution to the instabilities of the

region can only come from the exchange of land for peace. Despite their resistance, even the Israelis know this. The reference to Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 made at the press conference following the direct talks with the Palestinians and Jordanians was the first such Israeli acknowledgement that these resolutions would have to provide the basis for future substantive talks. No doubt this acknowledgement will eventually be tempered with interpretations which relate more to the concept of "personal autonomy" than to real territorial compromise, but the cornerstone on which Palestinians may build their case when seeking external — in particular U.S. — support is laid. The challenge now facing the Palestinians is to convince the U.S. that such autonomy is simply a formal disguise for total land expropriation, with all its invidious consequences, and that only genuine territorial autonomy can serve as an interim arrangement.

Meanwhile, however, Mr. Shamir, having been bullied into attending the conference, and having stalled it for as long as possible with preconditions, now appears to see his best option as lying in pursuing a talks-about-talks strategy which continually imposes decreasingly acceptable conditions on other parties. He is unable to personally reverse long-held commitments to retaining the occupied territories. Yet he is equally unable to successfully fend off external pressures to conform to the international con-

sensus that now is the time for peace. At home his right-wing colleagues become daily more outspoken in their criticism of his participation in the talks, yet he is fully aware that while there is literally nothing to talk about if not the conditions for the return of land, he must appear to be willing to talk if Israel is to maintain any external, notably U.S. sympathy. The monetary euphoria with which the Western world greeted the sight of Arabs and Israelis seated together will not last long if the land-for-peace issue is not addressed, at least partially, in the foreseeable future.

From Madrid, one can easily attribute the bickering and maximalism of the last few days to the need on all sides to assert positions of strength. The real deal-making will be an altogether much more discreet process. From Jerusalem, however, this argument appears unconvincing. Accelerated land expropriations, continued settlement construction, the channelling of Soviet immigrants to the occupied territories and the daily statements by Israeli political leaders against any kind of territorial compromise do not suggest that the Israelis are merely playing a game of bluff but that they are in deadly earnest when they say that the returns of those lands is definitely not on their agenda. — Middle East International.

Emma Murphy is a research fellow at the Department of Politics, Exeter University.

U.S. heads for collision with Israel over Mideast peace

By Alan Elsner
Reuters

WASHINGTON — The United States has put itself on a collision course with Israel by proposing that the Jewish state begin discussing with Syria an Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Golan Heights.

Diplomatic sources said the U.S. proposal was floated in invitation sent last week to Israel and Syria to attend peace talks in Washington next week.

In another proposal, this time aimed at Israel and Lebanon, the United States proposed that an Israeli-backed Lebanese military hand over to the Lebanese army control of the strategic town of Jezzine in southern Lebanon.

Analysts said the proposals signalled that Washington intended to be a driving force in Middle East peace efforts, inaugurated at last month's Madrid peace conference.

"These are just the kind of

proposals we need," said one delighted Arab diplomat. It shows that the United States is not just going to be a mediator but will be very active."

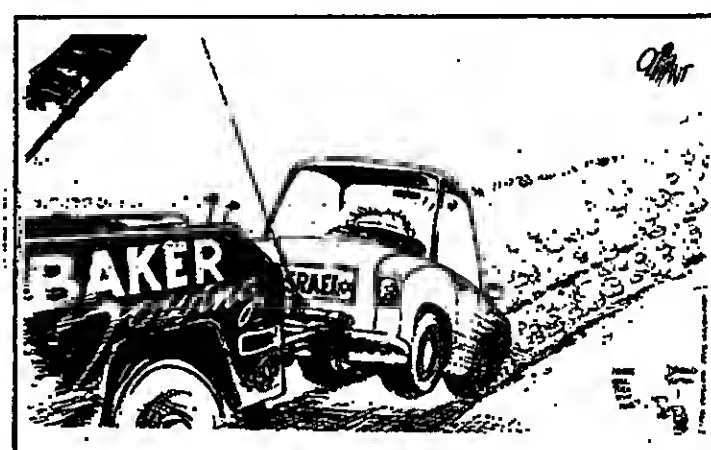
But delight in the Arab World is often reason for gloom in Israel and this is no exception.

Inevitably, by proposing "land for peace" deals of this sort, Washington is inviting a new confrontation with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir.

Mr. Shamir's right-wing government rejects the idea of withdrawing from even an inch of the Arab territories Israel has occupied since the 1967 war — the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Golan Heights and East Jerusalem.

"It looks like Israel is headed for a confrontation with the United States sooner or later. They may as well have it sooner," said one American Jewish leader.

"This is not what Israel conceives as America playing an honest broker. An Israeli with-



drawal from the Golan Heights? In return for what? A hypothetical promise of peace? It's not serious," he said.

NEWS ANALYSIS

The U.S. proposal on the Golan Heights is explosive be-

cause it violates the tenet at the heart of Israeli strategic thinking for a generation — that, come what may, Israel must keep the strategic plateau, which Syria once used to bombard Jewish settlements in the Jordan Valley.

Israel virtually annexed the territory in 1981. Earlier this month, its parliament reiterated

that it would not negotiate its status.

The United States always said it would present bridging proposals to the parties should their talks become deadlocked. What is unclear is why it put forward proposals now, before the talks had even begun much less reached an impasse.

One theory is that the Bush administration was worried that the Syrians would walk away from the peace process and so decided to give them a public indication it supported their position on the Golan Heights.

"There is limit to how far they can take this approach and how many hushes Shamir is prepared to accept," said Adam Garfinkle of the Foreign Policy Research Institute. "Sensitivities with Israel are so acute that if you run them the wrong way one more time, you could go over the limit."

Signs of brewing confrontation were already apparent when Mr.

Shamir held what sources described as bad-tempered meetings with Secretary of State James Baker and President George Bush last week.

As Mr. Shamir saw it, Washington rode roughshod over his demand to hold the peace negotiations in the Middle East. It did not even give him a chance to present his case to Mr. Bush before issuing the invitations.

Israel has dragged its feet on replying. While it seemed unlikely to refuse to attend the talks, it has signalled that it wants limited discussions confined to procedural questions.

"Shamir is trying to get Bush and Baker to understand that the United States cannot impose solutions on Israel. If they do, there can be no progress even on procedural matters," said Martin Indyk, director of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

"The message from Shamir is: If you want to play this role, try it and see how far you get."

The week in print

Israel must comply with U.N. resolutions; new government has tough road ahead

JORDANIAN newspapers in the past week gave prominence to the Middle East peace process in view of the coming talks in Washington, the issues facing the new government of Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and a host of domestic issues.

A columnist in Sawt Al Shaab said that if the United States wants to really achieve a just settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict, it should first control the arrogance of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and his cabinet minister Ariel Sharon.

Salameh Ekour said that the United States should force the Israeli government to comply with the will of the world community and the United Nations resolutions and withdraw from the occupied Arab lands. The writer said no one believes that the Israelis can continue to challenge the U.S. administration and can survive without American support.

In the view of Tareq Masarweh, the upcoming negotiations are going to be with the United States only because Israel does not wish to negotiate with the Arabs nor return any land to them.

Masarweh, who writes for Al

Ra'i Arabic daily, said that during the negotiations between the Americans and the Arabs, the Arabs will demand their rights back, in the face of continued Israeli rejections.

But he said that as long as Israel and the United States are in secret agreement about not giving up land in exchange for peace, the Arabs can never hope attain anything from the coming negotiations.

In the opinion of Hamadeh Faraaneh of Al Dostour, the Arabs hold three winning papers in the coming negotiations: the presence of Palestinians struggling for independence under occupation, the need to see the international legitimacy implemented, as supported by the world community, and the readiness of the Arabs to recognise Israel and make peace with it if it complies with the requirements of peace.

Ahmad Dhiban said that the Arabs should not forget that the United States continues to appease Israel and support its views. The writer said in his column, in Sawt Al Shaab, that by agreeing to move the venue of the negotiations to the Middle East after the opening talks in Washington, the United States is trying to win Israel's favour. The

United States would also try to win more favour from the Jewish state at a later stage at the expense of the Arab World, he warned.

A columnist in Al Dostour called on the Arabs to concert their stands at the coming negotiations and suggested that Syria take the lead in this respect. The Arabs together can constitute a strong force in the face of Israel's intransigence and can abort any Israeli move to deal with the Arabs one at a time in order to achieve its evil designs, said Taber Al Udwan in Al Dostour.

Referring to the current U.S.-Israeli crisis, Abdul Rahim Omar said that differences in views between the two allies are real.

Omar said that the United States' interests are different from those of Israel and Washington can not allow any country to compete with it for the Arab oil. The U.S. can neither allow any country in or outside the Middle East region to become more influential than itself over the destiny of the Arabs and therefore Washington has to have its own way in all matters related to the future of this region, Omar said.

Mustafa Abu Lebdeh said in Sawt Al Shaab that Israel is really concerned because it believes President George Bush can stop

at nothing in his drive to win a new mandate for himself in the White House. He will try to win the prestige of ending the Arab-Israeli conflict at any price. The writer said that Mr. Shamir has discovered during his recent tour in the United States that Israel's cause is no more a sacred thing for the Americans. Besides, he said, the Americans believe that the Arab oil is very important for the American economy and reduce the huge deficit in the American balance of payments.

Turning to the mission of new government of Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, Abdul Majid Nuseir said that the government was facing enormous domestic challenges in addition to those on the external front and the peace process.

Writing in Sawt Al Shaab, Dr. Nuseir said that the government has to give attention to the prevalence of law, national unity, political pluralism, economic and social ills, like unemployment and poverty, among a host of other problems which include the reform of public administration.

Hamadeh Faraaneh, of Al Dostour, said that the government is in need of new techniques and proper methods to ensure the

implementation of the directives of His Majesty King Hussein and to carry out the government reform programmes. Apart from dealing with the internal issues, the writer said, the government is bound to concert its efforts with the Arab states directly involved in the Arab-Israeli dispute to achieve success at the Middle East peace talks.

The writer said that the government should expand its base and adopt sound measures to enable Jordan to rid itself of the obsolete routine so as to achieve success.

Munes Al Razzaz, of Al Dostour, tackled the question of American threats directed at Libya and said that Washington is viewing the world at its own property after following the end of the cold war and in view of its victory in rallying world efforts to crush Iraq.

By committing another aggression against the Arabs, the writer said, the United States hopes to offer Israel another advantage over its Arab adversaries.

His views are backed by Taher Al Udwan, in Al Dostour, who said that the false accusations against Libya are aimed at paving the way for an aggression against the Arab country.

The writer expressed regret

that Libya would not be able to rally support for its just cause from the Arab World since, he said, the Arab countries are in disarray because they are under Washington's influence.

Salah Abdul Samad said in his column in Al Ra'i Arabic daily that the Labour Ministry can not, on its own, deal with the question of non-Jordanian workers employed in the country and has to be assisted by the private sector.

The writer referred in particular to the question of a recent report that only 21,000 out of 165,000 non-Jordanian workers hold work permits and said that a situation like this should prompt the ministry to take strict measures and safeguard public interest by avoiding the loss of vast sums of money.

Salameh Ekour in Sawt Al Shaab paid tribute to the Prime Minister for outlining the programme of his government in the first Cabinet session. He said the Jordanian people hope that the government would adhere strictly to the King's directives and deal promptly with matters related to public administration, unemployment and poverty and end the corruption in government circles.

King: Israeli leaders fear just peace

(Continued from page 1)

Did you base your acceptance on positive information for a peaceful resolution (to the conflict)? And what do you expect from the Washington talks?

At: The start of the peace conference in Madrid has enabled our brothers in Palestine, especially those who endured heroically for many years, to make a decent appearance in front of the whole world. Through Madrid they have reached every home and every person as a people struggling for its own rights on their soil. I think our performance in Madrid was good. We have prepared for that by providing the Palestinians with an umbrella within the joint delegation since there were no other options. Washington is a continuation of Madrid. It deals with Palestinian-Israeli and Arab-Israeli sides of the conflict. We continue on well-known bases. Resolutions 242 and 338, on which the original invitation to Madrid was based in addition to international legitimacy. I have great hope that despite the difficult and severe circumstances we are going ahead. We have rights on our side. We have been calling for peace since 1967. I personally was involved in the formulation of 242, though it did not get implemented so far. Then there is the other conference, multilateral talks, in which, it appears, many important countries will participate. We hope that during these negotiations Arabs will discuss the situation in the future with the Palestinians and Arab rights are restored. I think there are many positive sides to the multilateral. The Washington talks will mainly deal with the Palestinian aspect of the conflict, of the land and the right to it. While I think the other conference, and all others, and that is to seek a just and honourable peace that would be accepted by future generations. That is why I think the multilateral talks would provide the chance for discussing the issue at a wider level especially as regards to Palestinian rights.

Q: (Indicible)

A: As far as Palestinian-Jordanian coordination since the end of Madrid is concerned, work is going on. We have covered many stages. We will not be on the receiving end and dealing with issues as they occur. Instead we have an agenda and we have an agreement that we are developing and in which all important issues are being discussed.

Q: What about coordination with the PLO? Is it continuing?

A: Coordination is continuing. As far as we are concerned the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. We have a Palestinian embassy. Our stand is always supportive, within our means, to the rights of the Palestinian people on Palestinian soil.

Q: Israel announced yesterday that it won't go to Washington on Dec. 4 but on the 9th. What is your comment on that?

A: I think attempts like this will continue. I think they react from the fear of the present Israeli leadership of peace. That is why its opting for delay tactics and waste of time. As far as we are concerned we have received an invitation for the 4th and our joint delegation will go on this basis. Our arrangements are based on that.

Q: You mentioned Jordanian-Palestinian coordination. What about coordination with Syria? I have been reading a lot about some difference of opinion between the Syrian and Jordanian stands?

A: There could be some differences in interpretations. But since I am talking about the past, I'll also talk about the future. We are for coordination, coordination on equal footing as brothers. Propelled only by the higher national interest. We need to give and take to agree when possible, and we should, God willing, agree on all our stands. In reality the problem seems to be the definition of coordination. Coordination should be a collective and joint effort. In the absence of this we have our own interpretation. We are proponents of coordination and cooperation, God willing.

Q: We have noticed that in your relations with Egypt, there is thaw. You have telephoned President Hos-

ni Mubarak and you sent him a message. Shall we expect closeness in Egyptian-Jordanian positions?

A: In my opinion positions are close, especially as regards our common cause that we are dealing with. I also believe that matters among Arab brothers should go back to its normal course. We are only soldiers carrying our duties, and men doing whatever we could with our nation's interest as our objective. We might have different approaches at times but we are doing our work and we hope that future generation will judge as positively.

Q: What are the issues which will be discussed at the multilateral talks? Is it right it will convene in Moscow at the end of this month?

A: We did not receive anything definite on the date or the place. But I think it will start after or within a short time of the start of the talks in Washington. By the way, since we mentioned Washington I think Washington is a suitable venue. The U.S. is a very important power in our world now. Maybe the attempt to move the issue from Washington to another place indicates not only procrastination but also a desire to be far from the U.S., which has a large percentage of American Jews who are keen that Israel should follow a realistic and rational and more flexible policy. The U.S., which has for a long time chosen to play this role — which I have no doubt it will try to play again. It is the role of a mediator who abides by the rules. It should be respected concerning its campaign here as it should be respected in any similar situation anywhere in the world. It seems that Washington, and the U.S., is the suitable place. It seems that there are procrastination and escape attempts since we have a strong and just cause. In our case we defend peace and are trying to achieve it as so the generations after us will enjoy it and will accept it.

Q: Do you trust the seriousness of the U.S. administration in achieving peace?

A: It is our duty and our role. I think President Bush and his foreign minister, whom we had the chance to meet several times, have the determination and the intention to continue their work in a fair manner. Thus their goal is a just peace and ours is a just and honourable peace which the future generations will accept.

Q: Your Majesty, if we can go back to the multilateral talks; some say progress should be achieved in the peace negotiations first, and then the multilateral should be held at the same time with the bilateral. What is Jordan's position vis-a-vis this issue and what are the main points which will be discussed in it?

A: The main points discuss everything and I think chances and horizons given by this (multilateral) conference are much wider than this (bilateral) conference which we are about to start now. Therefore, our conviction and belief is that it is necessary to be held very soon because it will form a very pressing and symbolic power in the way of softening sides and supporting rights.

Q: But it depends on Israel's stand. It seems Israel is not taking the peace process seriously. Suppose we reached a dead-end? Does His Majesty have a certain concept for getting out of the critical situation concerning peace?

A: We have looked for peace for many years ago and we are in this regard is very clear. The world is asking us to carry out our role and our duty and to practically contribute to the making of peace. The world is watching and the world is interested. This part of the world is very important. Therefore we should carry out the role and duty to defend peace; not at any price, a just peace, an honourable peace, a peace that gives the Palestinian his right on his national soil and gives everybody the chance to live in security and stability in this region and gives them all their rights. That is the kind of peace we are looking for. The region is under a microscope and the whole world is watching and our issue is a just and just issue and our inclination towards peace is for a real, just and honourable peace. Israel with its leadership was radical and I think that even in Israel there are many who are against

radicalism, and are determined not to abort the process and to shoulder responsibility so that facts be known to everyone in the world.

Q: We all know the status of Jerusalem in the heart of His Majesty and in the heart of every Arab and Muslim. Do you envisage any solution or peace without Jerusalem as Israel claims?

A: It is very important. It is more important that being a part of a process. It is for all Muslims and for all.

Q: What about the settlement issue, Your Majesty?

A: This issue should be solved we believe. I have said it frankly more than once that there should be an impression that work (for peace) is serious. But the Arab side should continue to deal with the issue of peace (even at a time) when settlements are being built in the occupied Arab territories, which are under discussion.

Q: Suppose that progress towards peace was achieved. In the context of Palestinian-Jordanian relations, what the confederation means in the future? Is there a return to the issue of a united kingdom?

A: This people, Jordanians and Palestinians, are one people linked by strong bonds, clinging to one identity in both cases. But it forms two wings in one body, and practically forms elements in one family. It seems to me that the Palestinian tendency is towards distinct features. But the basis is that the people should practice this right, meaning the right to self determination over their own soil. We cannot in advance define the features before the Palestinian people retains its right to its national soil and can hence practice this right and choose. I think in conclusion there should be special relations which will be exemplary for relations between brothers. I think things have developed in our Arab World as a whole. One day we were talking about one country and we were talking about one leadership. The situation is now different, whether in the Arab World or the whole world. Now we talk about integration and cooperation as in, for example, the European experiment. We are not saying it is ideal, but it achieved a lot. I suppose in the Arab World we should achieve as they did and more in the future. But in the current formula, there is adherence to the Palestinian identity for the Palestinians, and there is adherence to the Jordanian identity for the Jordanians. When we talk about Jordan, we talk about all the good people here, all the good people regardless of their origins of the decision to sever ties with the West Bank be reviewed, particularly that Resolution 242 is legally, in terms of the international law, linked to Jordan. And there are some parties who propose this as a way of achieving international legitimacy?

A: Naturally the relation when it commenced was a relation between relatives and brethren and that of support and backing to save this part of the Arab World, which was one day targeted, and then of work on supporting the Palestinian side. When the unity started the aim was that it (the Palestinian land) was a deposit till the Palestinian problem is solved. We took this decision in response to Palestinian and Arab demands. But this does not mean in any way to give an answer that might help the Palestinian side in any position. We had the honour to defend this land and there was a unity in which we pride ourselves and there was the saving of the West Bank and Jerusalem.

We seek to get back the land not for ourselves, but for its owners who will decide its future. We demand the return of this land and we will work on that, and then its owners will decide whatever they want. There is nothing new in this issue, which is sensitive — that I cannot say more at the present.

Q: Your Majesty, there has been an optimistic scenario and a pessimistic one vis-a-vis the outcome of peace talks or whether they succeed or fail. You have often warned against war or disturbances in the region if this last chance of peace failed. Are there any new elements to the assessment we heard from you before?

A: I will not talk of war at any day and I will not talk of it as long as there are no circumstances for it. If a battle in

force on us we will defend ourselves with all our energy and capabilities. Talk of war is not one of my habits. War or the military option is the last option and in view of the current situation I am sure that the world as a whole is moving in the opposite direction from this kind of option, which may have been a possibility at one time or another in the past. If there is to be talk of force, then it would be force for self-defence, defence of land and our homeland. This is a right and a duty. If the peace efforts aimed at reaching a just and honourable solution accepted by coming generations fail, then the ground will be left to the extremist elements and frustration will breed cases which may lead the whole region to the brink of a precipice... I cannot predict the results, but a catastrophe of this kind, if it takes place, will not only affect this region or the people living in it but might also affect the world as a whole.

Q: Your Majesty, how the Arab situation in general and after what befell the nation as a result of the occupation of Kuwait and what resulted from that can be dealt with and what is the way out of this predicament?

A: We will do the impossible to come out of this current situation. I believe that every responsible brother in the Arab World and every person in this homeland — I am one of them — is aiming and hoping to deal with the repercussions of the past and to look at the present. If we look at the Arab people and the Arab states and the needed position towards confronting responsibilities as well as the present and the future, then things will become clear; facts will come to the surface and there will be real efforts to overcome all that happened for the sake of the interests of this region and for a better future, God willing.

Q: Your letter of appointment to the new prime minister emphasized the need to correct the imbalances affecting Jordanian-Saudi relations. Is there any way to cover the past and restore ties quickly to what they have been before?

A: We do not harbour towards our brother His Majesty King Fahd and our Saudi brethren anything but love and admiration for their stand towards us because throughout the march the truth is that they were always supporting this country and they never failed us in any obligation. In many cases they were the forerunners in providing help and support and this is something neither me nor the Jordanian people would ever forget. We have faced many surprises which we dealt with within our capacity. As to the situation we are in, it would not be a surprise if it became clear. I think that meetings are necessary and I am ready. I urge that meetings should take place at the highest levels although I think the issue does not require more than one encounter in itself and all negative aspects would disappear along with its impact because the interest is that of the people in the two countries and the Arab World. As to relations between the two kingdoms, the two countries are brothers and cooperation between us has always been unique. We do not get hurt from a brother because we consider ourselves only as men who have come, given the burden of responsibility and will pass away and only the people will stay in this nation.

Q: Noting that the Gulf countries were annoyed or sad over Jordan's stand in the Gulf war, can Your Majesty make clear whether Jordan supported the occupation of Kuwait or not and did President Saddam inform you of his decision concerning the invasion and did you know about it before hand nor after?

A: For the last time I state that Jordan was not informed on any day. Nor was I personally knowledgeable of a situation that would have resulted in harming the Arab states. I never approved nor supported any conspiracy of the sort. We noted some signs which greatly bothered us at and after the Baghdad summit but we hoped that the complexities would be solved in a brotherly manner and in completely different ways. Frankly I was surprised by the military operation. We never supported the occupation of Kuwait or the military invasion of Kuwait or the changing of Kuwait's features or the annexation of Kuwait. We tried to resolve the

issue with all our means and within the Arab framework and this is all that happened. Once we meet our Arab brethren the true picture of our position will be clear to every one.

Our principled stand was clear from the very beginning — that occupying lands of others by force is basically outlawed. Its illegality stands with Resolution 242. We are for cooperation, trust and brotherly relations to relieve and clear any doubts.

Q: Are there efforts to hold a comprehensive Arab summit, mini-summit?

A: Any meeting would bring good results; God willing. There was talk and there may still be an opportunity shortly, God willing. It would give Arab leaders a chance to meet.

Q: Will you attend the Islamic summit?

A: God willing.

Q: If Your Majesty would allow me to turn to local issues. Is the last government change an indication of a com-

prehensive change in the internal and external policies and why was this move taken at this time in particular?

A: No, it is not the beginning of a comprehensive change at all. What is meant is democracy to which we are committed and which we have adopted. Although the first steps met with many difficulties and problems, we have chosen the road and we will continue to move with it, God willing. Naturally after the decision to sever ties with the West Bank we decided to conduct national elections. At that time or immediately after we took that decision, we were hit by the first economic shock which was caused by what had affected our brothers and friends in Palestine. It had reflected on us directly. Therefore we moved on the track of the elections. ... It could not be held before the decision to sever legal and administrative ties with the West Bank. Then there was the issue of the National Charter and a Royal Committee was formed. The sons of the nation, from the extreme

right to the extreme left, debated and reached results, which are truly a source of pride. But they have not crystallized into reality yet, especially concerning political pluralism. Then we were surprised by the regional developments which have left their results on us. Even on the political level we are asking for linkage at one of the stages to deal with the Palestinian issue with the same manner as other issues in the world and this is the issue that has gained the limelight now and all efforts are extended to solve it. Things have moved fast and even our internal programme was overtaken by events. Therefore it was necessary to hold a large national meeting to pose the issues to the people as whole, our family and our brothers. Then we moved towards the political world and at the same time we tried to crystallize another track to reconstruct and organize our hope within this framework organized at this stage. The National Charter would become a larger reality in our

lives and therefore our people must have a say in who is going to represent them in the future in light of the new reality.

Q: This is the second government in which the Muslim Brotherhood is not represented. Is this the beginning of confrontation with opposition? And if that confrontation occurred do you believe Parliament should be dissolved and elections conducted?

A: When the National Charter moves into reality in our life this would naturally lead to elections on their set date. The House is only two years old. Circumstances might force early elections. But the ultimate arbiter is the people, regarding government performance or parliamentary life as represented in the Lower House, which was elected by the people. From my position I am very keen to see that no trespassing from one side occurs to the other — not from the executive on the legislative nor from any on the judicial. I want the march to

(Continued on page 2)



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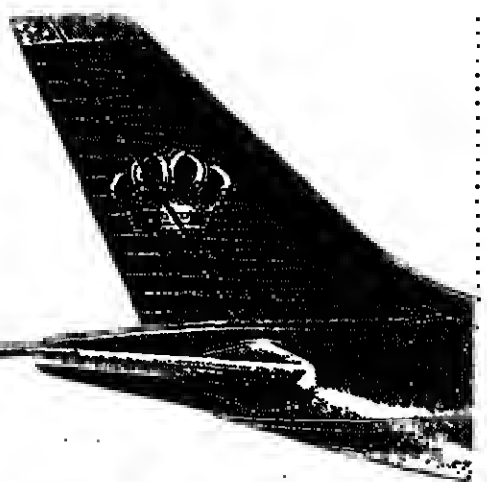
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Financial Markets

Jordan Times
in co-operation with
Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

| Currency | NEW YORK CLOSE | TOKYO CLOSE |
|------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| | Date 27/11/91 | Date 28/11/91 |
| Sterling Pound | 1.7685 | 1.7685 |
| Deutsche Mark | 1.6145 | 1.6156 |
| Swiss Franc | 1.4260 | 1.4267 |
| French Franc | 5.5135 | 5.5110** |
| Japanese Yen | 129.89 | 130.07 |
| European Currency Unit | 1.2605 | 1.2621 ** |

* USD Per STG
** European Opening @ 8:00 a.m. GMT

Interbank Bid rates for accounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Practicality Rates Date: 28/11/91

| Currency | 1 MTH | 3 MTHS | 6 MTHS | 12 MTHS |
|------------------------|-------|--------|--------|---------|
| U.S. Dollar | 5.72 | 4.87 | 4.87 | 4.93 |
| Sterling Pound | 10.37 | 10.43 | 10.43 | 10.43 |
| Deutsche Mark | 9.56 | 9.37 | 9.37 | 9.31 |
| Swiss Franc | 8.00 | 8.12 | 8.06 | 7.87 |
| French Franc | 9.68 | 9.68 | 9.62 | 9.56 |
| Japanese Yen | 6.34 | 6.06 | 5.87 | 5.68 |
| European Currency Unit | 10.12 | 10.12 | 10.12 | 10.18 |

Practicality Rates Date: 28/11/91

| Metal | USD/Oz | JD/Gm | Metal | USD/Oz | JD/Gm |
|-------|--------|-------|--------|--------|-------|
| Gold | 367.80 | 6.90 | Silver | 4.09 | .089 |

* 31 Karat
Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Date: 28/11/91

| Currency | Bid | Offer |
|----------------|---------|---------|
| U.S. Dollar | 0.681 | 0.683 |
| Sterling Pound | 1.2021 | 1.2081 |
| Deutsche Mark | 0.4208 | 0.4229 |
| Swiss Franc | 0.3765 | 0.4789 |
| French Franc | 0.1232 | 0.1238 |
| Japanese Yen | 0.5234 | 0.5260 |
| Dutch Guilder | 0.3734 | 0.3753 |
| Swedish Krona | 0.1149 | 0.1155 |
| Italian Lira | 0.0558 | 0.0561 |
| Belgian Franc | 0.02043 | 0.02053 |

Other Currencies Date: 28/11/91

| Currency | Bid | Offer |
|----------------|---------|--------|
| Bahraini Dinar | 1.7770 | 1.7860 |
| Lebanese Lira | 0.0772 | 0.0779 |
| Saudi Riyal | 0.1813 | 0.1820 |
| Kuwaiti Dinar | - | - |
| Qatari Riyal | 0.18455 | 0.1852 |
| Egyptian Pound | 0.2000 | 0.2150 |
| Omani Riyal | 1.7430 | 1.7520 |
| UAE Dirham | 0.18455 | 0.1852 |
| Greek Drachma | 0.3681 | 0.3732 |
| Cypriot Pound | 1.4777 | 1.4991 |

CAB Indices for Amman Financial Market

| Index | 26/11/91 | Close | 27/11/91 | Close |
|------------------|----------|-------|----------|-------|
| All-Share | 125.03 | | 125.14 | |
| Banking Sector | 104.76 | | 104.91 | |
| Insurance Sector | 126.63 | | 127.09 | |
| Industry Sector | 155.10 | | 155.18 | |
| Services Sector | 138.74 | | 138.43 | |

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at mid-session on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Friday.

| | | |
|-------------------|---------------|------------------|
| One Sterling | 1.7545/60 | U.S. dollars |
| One U.S. dollar | 1.1345/50 | Canadian dollar |
| | 1.6350/60 | Deutschmarks |
| | 1.8410/20 | Dutch guilders |
| | 1.4405/12 | Swiss francs |
| | 33.65/66 | Belgian francs |
| | 5.5850/5900 | French francs |
| | 1230/1231 | Italian lire |
| | 130.20/30 | Japanese yen |
| | 5.9800/50 | Swedish crowns |
| | 6.4250/4300 | Norwegian crowns |
| | 6.3540/90 | Danish crowns |
| One ounce of gold | 366.50/366.90 | U.S. dollars |

Trade deficit points to increasing weakness in Canadian economy

OTTAWA (R) — Canada suffered a \$11 million dollar (\$276 million) trade deficit in September for the first time in more than 15 years as imports hit a record high and exports fell sharply.

"It is a disturbing number given the fact that most export categories are down," said Bob Boaz, chief economist with Deacon Barclays de Zoete Wedd Ltd. "The Canadian economy has stalled and it points towards the third quarter being at risk."

Canada pulled out of recession in the second quarter when the economy grew after a year of falling output.

Since then the frail economy has shown increasing signs of extremely slow growth.

Manufacturers blame the high value of the Canadian dollar against the U.S. dollar for the fall in exports, although the strong currency has given a boost to Canadian consumers.

According to government statistics, exports fell 852 million dollars (\$756 million) to 11.6 billion dollars (\$10.3 billion) in September while imports rose 524 million dollars (\$465 million) to 11.9 billion dollars (\$10.6 billion).

"Exports are falling relative to the second quarter, and that drag is compounded by a jump in imports," said Paul Ferley, an economist with the Bank of Montreal.

Most analysts had predicted a trade surplus of about one billion dollars (\$900 million) and blamed the drop in exports on weakness in the United States, Canada's largest trading partner.

"The U.S. economy is weak and exports will not surge. But there is reason to hope there will not be another sharp drop-off as seen in this month," said Mr.

Ferley.

Canada has traditionally relied on a large trade surplus to offset interest payments and dividends on inflows of capital investment.

Economists said Canadian manufacturers, plagued by poor retail sales at home and weak demand abroad, are unlikely to rebound from recession soon.

Manufacturing output fell across the board in September, with shipments slipping 0.4 per cent, unfilled orders dropping 0.6 per cent and new orders down 0.3 per cent, the government agency Statistics Canada has said.

"Manufacturing is weak and if there is any recovery it is a very weak recovery," said Mark Macgregor, an analyst with Statistics Canada.

The trends for transportation, electrical, fabricated metals and wood manufacturers are all slowing down. And the prospects for coal, machinery and paper manufacturers are not much better, analysts said.

"Weakness in orders is very broad based and not related to a specific sector," said Andrew Gampel, a senior economist with the Bank of Nova Scotia, who adds that order bookings are being trimmed back in conjunction with weakening retail sales.

"This calls into question an export-led recovery in Canada," he said.

"It looks like the recovery, even a very limited recovery, has petered out," said Andrew Jackson, chief economist with the Canadian Labour Congress.

"There is a real chance we slipped back into recession in the third quarter. Actually we over really came out of a recession but it was more like we bottomed out," he pointed out.

Indians show anger over reform

NEW DELHI (R) — A one-day nationwide strike called by leftists unions to protest against reforms in India's state-dominated economy crippled business across the nation Friday, officials and reports said.

The strike halted work at state-owned banks and insurance companies, forced cancellation of airline flights, disrupted public transport and shut down state industrial plants, Indian news agencies reported.

More than 12 million workers and 3.5 million government employees joined the strike, said M.K. Pandey, chairman of the All-India Industrial Strike Committee.

Acting Labour Minister P.A. Sangma disputed the figures, saying the strike had little or no impact in two-thirds of India, but he said the financial sector and air transport had been seriously affected.

The strike had limited effect in New Delhi and Bombay, but Calcutta, state capital of West Bengal where a communist-led government is in power, was virtually paralysed.

For India's Marxist parties, which hold about 50 seats in the 545-member Lok Sabha (lower house of parliament), the strike was an opportunity to rally members dismayed by the collapse of communism elsewhere in the world.

Workers squatted on railway tracks in West Bengal to stop trains. Railway officials said they were beaten and thrown out of their offices when they reported for work.

But the strike was generally peaceful across the nation of 850 million people, news agencies said.

A spokesman for Indian Airlines, the main domestic carrier, said 40 per cent of its Friday flights were cancelled.

Bombay officials said state-run banks and insurance companies were at a standstill but the city's port, India's busiest, was working normally and the crucial suburban rail network was unaffected.

Workers fear a planned restructuring of India's bloated and debt-ridden state enterprises will mean large-scale layoffs.

The government is planning major banking reforms. State-owned banks control 80 per cent of all assets and unions fear reforms will allow private sector banking to grow at their expense.

Harish Sharma, joint secretary of the Bank Employees Federation of India, told reporters on a picket line in the capital that the new policies, initiated at the "instigation of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, are aimed at enslaving the country and destroying our self-reliance."

A Congress Party government returned to power in June, facing economic crisis and burdened with a \$71 billion foreign debt.

A month later, it stunned India with far-reaching economic reforms reversing four decades of government control of an economy protected from international competition.

The government swept aside red tape that businessmen had complained of, invited long-desired foreign companies to take majority stakes in joint ventures and liberalised a restrictive international trade regime.

It also borrowed about \$4 billion from the International Monetary Fund, which had been pressing for many of the reforms announced so far.

The government says a national renewal fund, being set up with \$500 million of World Bank money, will retrain and relocate workers who lose their jobs in the reforms.

Experts see slower than expected world recovery

SANTIAGO, Chile (R) — Economic recovery in industrial nations appears to be slower than expected and the world economy could grow less than forecast in 1992, International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Michel Camdessus said Thursday.

The IMF had projected a moderate world recovery next year based on a 2.75 per cent rate of growth in industrialised countries.

"In the last few weeks we have observed several signs that the recovery of the U.S. economy could be less solid than expected," Mr. Camdessus said during a visit to Chile.

He said indicators also pointed to a more fragile economic situation in other industrialised countries.

"These signals have given rise to a visible loss of confidence among consumers and investors that contributed, on do not, to the recent decline in stock markets," he said.

"We can still expect a recovery of growth in industrialised nations in 1992, but it could be somewhat less than we had expected," Mr. Camdessus said.

Speaking at the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Mr. Camdessus said growth in developing nations will, likewise, be slightly under the IMF's original forecasts.

Latin America will achieve a real growth rate of 2.25 per cent in 1992, still too little, he said.

Mr. Camdessus said a majority of Latin American countries had undertaken structural adjustments, slashed their fiscal deficits and brought inflation under control.

A large group of countries could expect to grow between four and five per cent next year, among them Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, Peru and Chile, he said.

Mr. Camdessus singled out Argentina and Peru for bold efforts to adjust their economies.

He said Argentina had restored domestic and international confidence and the IMF hoped to support its adjustment programme with an extended facility agreement early next year.

On Peru, whose debt arrears include obligations with the IMF, Mr. Camdessus said: "Experience has taught me never to lose hope over the situation of a country."

Mr. Camdessus said there was much room to increase saving levels worldwide by cutting unproductive spending, particularly military budgets.

He said the additional saving could be enough to finance the rebuilding of eastern European economies, fund reforms in the Soviet Union and repair the damage done by the Gulf war without having to reduce aid to developing nations.

The World Bank's chief economist said last Tuesday that an anticipated recovery in the world economy is not happening and economic growth in 1992 will be disappointing, with this year one of the worst since 1945.

Lawrence Summers, who is also vice president of the bank, told an economic seminar in



Michel Camdessus

Tokyo that output in the developing world was expected to fall this year for the first time since 1950.

While some official forecasts saw restoration of moderate world economic growth in the 2.5-3.0 per cent range in 1992, recent developments, particularly in the United States, were alarming, Mr. Summers said.

A wide range of indicators suggested that an anticipated pickup in economic activity was not occurring, he said.

But slower growth was due to individual conditions in various countries, he said.

"In these circumstances, there is no compelling case for concerted international action," he said.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Monday that the United States looks set to suffer one of its slowest economic recoveries ever, but it should be able to avoid falling back into recession.

"The OECD, which acts as a 'think tank' for major industrial nations, said in a special report that lower interest rates and oil prices should lead to faster U.S. economic growth next year."

"We don't think there will be a double-dip recession," said an OECD official, who asked not to be identified, "But the recovery will be slow."

After snapping out of recession in the second quarter following the Gulf war, the U.S. economy has recently shown signs of stagnating, setting off alarm bells on Wall Street and Capitol Hill about the recovery's durability.

OECD officials admitted they have had to revise down

their forecasts for U.S. economic growth in just the past few weeks, but they said they remained confident that the recovery is continuing.

The OECD now expects U.S. economic growth next year of about 2.5 per cent, instead of the 3.1 per cent it was forecasting before. That would make the recovery one of the slowest, if not the slowest, ever.

OECD officials said the economy should pick up steam as 1992 progresses. Growth in the fourth quarter of this year is expected to only be about 1.5 per cent, picking up slightly to some two per cent in the first quarter of 1992, they added.

An OECD official said he could not rule out completely the possibility of the economy actually contracting in the fourth quarter. But even if that occurred, it would not mean the U.S. economy was falling back into recession, just bumping along the bottom, he said.

However, he voiced concern about consumers' recent lack of confidence about the economy, saying that could prove self-fulfilling if it persists and trigger a double-dip recession.

OECD officials said the U.S. economy has failed to pick up as originally forecast because it has taken longer than expected for lower interest rates to spur spending.

While the OECD believes that interest rates have already been cut far enough, they said the Federal Reserve (Fed) could cut rates further without taking any major risk with inflation.

"We don't think there's any inflationary risk right now," one OECD official said. "If they (U.S. policymakers) want to take out insurance on the recovery, we would rather they... lower interest rates than break the budget agreement."

But the OECD warned that the Fed will have to be ready to raise interest rates back up again after the economy picks up steam and well before it starts to strain against its capacity constraints. That, though, is unlikely to happen until 1993.

While the OECD generally gave good marks to last year's agreement to cut the budget deficit by nearly \$500 billion over five years, it warned that it could be undermined.

"We remain concerned about the budget deficit," an OECD official said.

TUNISIAN DATES

and not Iraqi dates as erroneously published in Jordan Times on 25/11/1991.

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U.N. troops pull back after attack on Cambodian leaders

BATTAMBANG, Cambodia (R) — United Nations peacekeepers have withdrawn from frontline positions in northwestern Cambodia fearing revenge attacks by Khmer Rouge guerrillas, a senior Australian officer told Reuters Friday.

Two days after arriving in Battambang, a three-man detachment of Australian signallers and 31 French transport specialists were ordered to return to Phnom Penh after an angry mob there attacked Khmer Rouge leader Khieu Samphan forcing him to leave the country.

The soldiers, part of the U.N.'s Advance Mission in Cambodia (UNAMIC), had been deployed in Battambang, Cambodia's second biggest city, Monday to establish radio communications between the U.N. and Cambodian army headquarters.

The small U.N. force was ordered to pull out as a security measure after the attack on Khieu Samphan and his defence minister Son Sen, in Phnom Penh Wednesday, but would be redeployed in the near future, the officer said.

Mr. Khieu Samphan had returned to Phnom Penh that day from 13 years in exile under the terms of U.N.-sponsored peace accords between the government and a guerrilla coalition the Khmer Rouge dominates.

Seven hours after their arrival he was bundled, beaten and bloody, onto a plane back to Bangkok along with Mr. Son Sen after their residence was stormed by a vengeful mob of Cambodians.

The two men were forced to hide in a wardrobe while hundreds of attackers, some armed with axes, screamed for retribution for relatives killed during the 1975-79 Khmer Rouge revolution in which more than a million died.

Asked if the reason for the pullout was fear of Khmer Rouge attacks, the officer replied: "Yes, that's basically correct."

Australia has provided a 40-man contingent of signallers to UNAMIC and the deployment to

Battambang of a three-man detachment was to have lasted for the duration of the U.N.'s mission in Cambodia.

"We're pulling down in one day what took us three days to set up," said a despondent Australian corporal at a temporary base in Battambang's downy January 7th Hotel, after receiving orders to withdraw.

"I feel sorry for the locals. They think we're here to fight. That makes it tough."

The Cambodian army commander of Number Four Division, based in Treng district 40 kilometres south of Battambang, said he had ordered his troops to re-establish and clean out townships in case of a Khmer Rouge attack.

"After Khieu Samphan and Son Sen left Phnom Penh, I think they'll (the Khmer Rouge) soon attack us," said Lieutenant Colonel Ken Bunthorn.

He said he ordered his troops to redig the trenches soon after he heard of the mob attack in Phnom Penh.

Government troops aimed Soviet-made artillery at Khmer Rouge positions around Pailin, a gem-mining district near the Thai border held by the guerrillas.

On Thursday, intermittent shelling could be heard from government positions around the nearby Treng commune.

"So far we fight back to defend ourselves. We respect the ceasefire and we don't violate," Col. Bunthorn said. "But, if they (the Khmer Rouge) violate, they oblige us to return fire."

"We should not trust them because their actions are different to their talk," he said.

Speaking from his headquarters, a timber and dirt-reinforced bunker bearing the scars of past rocket attacks, the Phnom Penh commander said he hoped UNAMIC peacekeepers could be deployed to his position.

"I wish UNAMIC could be based here with us so we know who is violating the peace agreement. If UNAMIC just stays in Battambang they (the Khmer Rouge) will ignore the truce."

Scales of justice tip against U.K. system

LONDON (R) — The English judicial system, a model for much of the world, looked badly tarnished this week after fresh disclosures about miscarriages of justice.

Even as a government-appointed commission considered what reforms were needed, new cases of unsafe convictions during the 1970s and 1980s eroded public confidence in the nation's bewigged and robed judges, its juries and its police.

And the complexity of the ancient legal system, based on a mixture of statutes and precedents, drew criticism from Princess Anne, Queen Elizabeth's daughter.

"If you can't understand what the law is saying and what the law means, there is a major problem for society itself," she said.

Her comments capped a bad week for the law.

On Monday, an appeal court quashed the conviction of Winston Silcott, 32, jailed in 1987 for

the murder of a policeman who was hacked to death in a riot.

Tuesday saw the European Court of Human Rights censure the government for using the law to bar press coverage of a boud, Spycatcher, which contained memoirs of a former secret agent.

Next, big store chains announced that, as there has been no reform of centuries-old law which curbs them from doing business Sunday, they were simply going to break it.

The Silcott case and other miscarriages of justice, however, provoked the biggest outcry.

Similar cases have involved Irish people being freed on appeal years after being convicted over fatal Irish Republican Army (IRA) bombing attacks.

A common thread in several cases has been that public outrage put police under pressure to get convictions.

Campaigners raised doubts about original trial evidence by the police, accepted by juries under

Kohl warned not to concede too much on EC

BONN (R) — Germany's opposition Social Democrats (SPD) warned Chancellor Helmut Kohl Friday not to concede too much on European integration to win support for a deal at a crucial EC summit next month.

The party's foreign spokesman, Norbert Gansel, said his party might block ratification of treaties on EC economic and political union if they did not strengthen the European Parliament considerably.

Mr. Kohl's decision to back a gradual strengthening of the European Parliament, a key concession he has made to win British support at the EC's Maastricht summit on Dec. 9-10, could hurt rather than help further integration, he said.

"A step-by-step plan can easily turn into a stumbling block along the road to Europe," Mr. Gansel told a radio interviewer. "If Maastricht does not bring any improvement, then German ratification is in danger."

Mr. Kohl originally wanted the European Parliament to take on wide-ranging powers by its next election in 1994.

He began speaking of a longer timetable this week after meeting British Prime Minister John Major, who faces deep concern within his own Conservative Party over any loss of sovereignty to the EC.

But the chancellor made clear Thursday he could make that concession only if the summit made the Community's progress towards full integration irreversible.

The head of the Bonn parliament's EC Committee, like Mr. Kohl a Christian Democrat, said her group also thought current plans for strengthening the European Parliament were too weak.

"The government will press for more improvements on these points," Mr. Renate Hellwig said in a statement Friday.

Ukraine expected to choose independence

KIEV, Soviet Union (R) — Defying warnings of catastrophe from President Mikhail Gorbachev, Ukrainian voters are likely to choose independence Sunday and slam the door on his plans for a new Soviet confederation.

Ukrainian politicians expect voters to say "yes" for independence by a convincing majority, confirming a decision taken by parliament in Kiev after the collapse of last August's Moscow coup.

Voters will simultaneously choose the first directly-elected Ukrainian president from a field of six candidates.

Parliamentary Chairman Leonid Kravchuk, a former Communist Party ideologist, is strongly favoured to win against a divided opposition.

Local journalists said Kravchuk's chances of winning over 50 per cent majority on the first ballot and avoiding run-off were improved this week by the withdrawal of Agriculture Minister Alexander Tkachenko.

Mr. Tkachenko called on his supporters to give their votes to Mr. Kravchuk.

The Ukraine has been ruled from Moscow for more than 300 years, since the two countries were linked by a treaty.

Its first attempt to achieve independence after 1917 Bolshevik Revolution was crushed by Moscow.

An independent Ukrainian state would have 53 million people, making it among Europe's largest countries.

Despite the likely outcome of the vote, there is little agreement on what independence will mean for the economic and political price the Ukraine may have to pay to decide it.

"Everybody wants to live in a free Ukraine, but everybody understands that in their own way," said Yuri Makarov, leader of a workers' strike committee.

"What I fear is that an independent Ukraine will end up as a reproduction of the old Soviet Union on a smaller scale, said Arkady Boudaryevsky, a radiologist.

Critics of Mr. Kravchuk say he is the candidate of the old Communist bureaucracy which still occupies almost all top positions in the Ukraine, despite the fact that the ruling party itself no longer exists.

They accuse him of being too ready to make "concessions to Moscow and of lacking the commitment of radical political and economic change displayed by Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

Shock for De Klerk as black-white talks start

JOHANNESBURG (R) — South Africa's first political reform talks between whites and blacks began Friday after white voters delivered a loud "no" to President F.W. de Klerk's plans to share power with blacks.

While most sides at the historic talks at a Johannesburg Airport Hotel expressed optimism about creating a post-apartheid constitution, the pro-apartheid Conservative Party celebrated a crushing victory over Mr. De Klerk's National Party in an all white parliamentary election.

The Conservatives — the only major party boycotting the talks — seized the rural Orange Free State constituency of Virginia Thursday night by more than 3,000 votes, representing a 15 per cent swing away from the Nationalists and their reform message.

Independent political analysts said that while the result was a bad blow for Mr. De Klerk, it did not necessarily mean he would lose a national white referendum on his reforms, widely expected to take place next year if the talks go well.

But Conservative Party leader Andries Treurnicht called on Mr. De Klerk to hold another all-white election going any further and predicted his party would win.

Within minutes of convening Friday, 21 political groups, including the white government, elected two senior judges to chair the two-day talks at preparing for full-scale negotiations on Dec. 20.

"We are very optimistic," said Cyril Ramaphosa, general secretary of Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC), the biggest black grouping. "We think we are going to have very good outcome."

Defence Minister Roelf Meyer, representing the National Party which introduced apartheid in 1948 and abandoned it this year, said: "There is no alternative to negotiations."

He and Justice Minister Kobie Coetsee brushed aside the Virginia loss as resulting from a local economic recession.

But as the conference convened, radio stations were running interviews with Virginia whites saying they were dismayed at government plans to shed 300 years of white supremacy. Several said that if they could not stop Mr. De Klerk at the ballot box they would take up their guns.

The talks are the first on political reform between a range of anti-apartheid organisations and a white government.

Barney Dessel of the radical Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) told reporters: "We hope we can come out of this with a government of legitimacy. If there have been any deals done we must undo them."

The PAC dropped a political bombshell Wednesday when it accused the ANC of undermining their new patriotic front negotiating alliance by secretly agreeing with Mr. De Klerk to set up an interim government. Both the government and the ANC have denied it.

Column

Doomsday clock reset for a changed world

CHICAGO (R) — The keepers of the Doomsday Clock reset its hands Tuesday, telling the world it is now safer from nuclear war than at any time since the end of World War II. The directors of the bulletin of atomic scientists, the publication that created and maintains the symbolic clock, pushed the minute hand back 17 minutes before midnight — the hour that represents nuclear holocaust. It is the farthest away from midnight the hand has ever been in the clock's 46 years. Even more symbolic, perhaps, is that the clock depicts only the last 15 minutes of the hour, and the minute hand is now two minutes outside that range. "The world has entered a new era," the magazine announced in an editorial. "The cold war is over. The 40-year-long East-West nuclear arms race has ended. The illusion that tens of thousands of nuclear weapons are a guarantor of national security has been stripped away." Until Tuesday the hand had been at 10 minutes to midnight.

Major named U.K. worst-dressed man

LONDON (R) — A fashion magazine ribbed Prime Minister John Major for reputedly tucking his shirt into his underpants and named him Britain's worst-dressed man. "The suit wears him and he will never live down the underpants," Arena magazine said in naming Mr. Major "the greyest of them all" in its League of Britain's 20 worst-dressed men. Mr. Major's fu: poked at his fashion style and his office had no comment on the latest broadside. The British Shops and Stores Association recently branded his clothes a complete bore.

Olympic champion admits spying for Stasi

CHEMNITZ, Germany (R) — Lutz Dombrowski, the 1980 Olympic long jump champion, has admitted that he had worked as an informer for the state security police of former Communist east Germany. Dombrowski told the Chemnitz Morgenpost newspaper that he had signed an agreement to supply information about fellow athletes to the Stasi, who spied on millions of east Germans and compiled files on every aspect of their lives. "I am sorry that I signed in 1979. I was just frightened that I would not be allowed to travel abroad anymore," Dombrowski, 32, was quoted as saying. He is the first top-class sportsman to admit to having worked for the organisation.

Elderly sisters lose car at garage

LONDON (R) — Two absent-minded sisters blamed thieves when their car vanished from outside their London home. Beryl and Doris Mead, both in their 80s, forgot they had asked a garage to tow the car away for repairs after it failed to start on Wednesday. They only realised their mistake three months later after they took a new car they bought with insurance money into the same garage for repairs. They found their old car waiting for them. And ironically there was nothing wrong with it — they had forgotten to fill the petrol tank.

'Tarzan boy' found living in squalor with dying pets

LONDON (R) — Police broke into a house in Britain's "stockbroker" belt to find an 11-year-old mystery boy living in squalor with 80 dead and dying pets. Wednesday newspapers dubbed the child, who had waist-length matted blond hair, the "jungle boy" and said his mother, 31, had kept him caged up in a house of horrors in the well-heeled country of Surrey, south of London. "I find it mind-boggling that for 11 years without the authorities knowing," local Social Services Director Graham Gatt-house said. Police went to the house on an unrelated matter and found the woman and boy living amid a menagerie of sick and dead pets. Hundreds of mice scavenged in piles of rotting rubbish. Neighbours said they had been too frightened of the mother to report the boy's existence to authorities. The woman and boy, who were not named, were taken into local authority care.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Former Japanese minister jailed

TOKYO (R) — A former Japanese cabinet minister received a punitive prison term Friday for evading billions of yen in tax on stock speculation profits while in office. In a landmark case against Japan's tradition of money politics, Toshiyuki Inamura, environment minister between 1983 and 1987, was sentenced to three years and four months with hard labour without possibility of remission. Mr. Inamura was the first politician to receive such a prison term, seen as a warning to others, since former Premier Kakuei Tanaka was convicted in the 1976 Lockheed bribery scandal. Sentences on tax evasion cases are usually suspended in Japan on pledges of future good conduct. "The defendant betrayed the people by evading his duty to pay taxes. Also, the sum was too large," said Judge Shigeru Matsura at the Tokyo district court. "The defendant definitely lacked responsibility as a member of parliament who should be an example to the nation," he said. Mr. Inamura, who had pleaded guilty to the charges tried to appeal for leniency on the grounds that politicians required massive funds to stay in office and that he had shown remorse by resigning from his lower house seat.

Last cases filed against Mrs. Marcos

MANILA (R) — The Philippines Friday completed filing criminal charges against Imelda Marcos, raising the number now pending against the former first lady to 80. Solicitor-general Francisco Chavez said Friday's 12 counts of corruption would be the last criminal charges lodged by the government against the widow of dictator Ferdinand Marcos. But thousands of political detainees jailed by her late husband also plan to sue. Romco Capulong, a lawyer for dissidents tortured and jailed under martial law, said they want a share of the Marcos wealth to compensate for their suffering. Justice Secretary Silvestre Bello said he has formed a panel to prepare charges of human rights abuses against the Marcoses. Mr. Chavez said the new criminal cases filed with the Justice Department alleged that Mrs. Marcos and a business associate, Roberto Benedicto, used \$75 million illegally deposited in Swiss banks to buy high-yield central bank treasury notes.

Singapore premier visited S. Africa

SINGAPORE (R) — Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong said Friday that a visit he made to South Africa in October was aimed at assessing prospects for business once anti-apartheid sanctions are lifted. "I stopped by to see for myself what the place was like and of course, at the back of my mind was whether we could do business with the South Africans when the sanctions are lifted," Mr. Goh said in a lecture to university students. Mr. Goh was replying to a question about his surprise visit to South Africa after commonwealth heads of government met in neighbouring Zimbabwe. Mr. Goh went to South Africa two days after the Commonwealth lifted consular and visa restrictions, cultural and scientific boycotts and a ban on air travel links in recognition of reforms aimed at giving blacks political rights. The summit also decided to lift trade and financial sanctions in stages as South Africa moves from white-led rule to democracy.

Gunmen kill five in Pakistan

KARACHI (R) — Five people, including three policemen, were killed and eight were wounded when gunmen fired on a roadside tea-house in Pakistan's commercial capital Karachi, police said Friday. The killings happened Thursday night when four gunmen on motorcycles rode up to the tea-house in Baghbari frequented by police and sprayed it with automatic fire. Police said they did not know the motive for the killings or who was responsible. The attack followed a two-day purge of supporters of the opposition Pakistan People's Party (PPP) during which hundreds of activists have been detained across the southern province of Sind. Baghbari is in the parliamentary constituency of Asif Ali Zardari, husband of opposition leader Benazir Bhutto. He has been in jail for more than a year while standing trial on several charges, including plotting the killings of over 20 of the PPP's political foes last year.

Space near-miss worries U.S. officials

HOUSTON (R) — A near-miss between the U.S. manned shuttle Atlantis and an old Soviet rocket has prompted U.S. space chiefs to look for new ways of averting catastrophic collisions caused by man-made junk in space.

"There is a concern and we are looking at upgrading our ability to track space debris," Steve Nesbitt, spokesman for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), said Friday.

The Atlantis had to make an emergency swerve on Thursday to avoid colliding with the remains of Cosmos 851, a Soviet booster rocket believed to have been launched in 1976.

The U.S. space command in Colorado Springs, Colorado, which operates the space surveillance network, flashed a warning to the Johnson Space Centre in Houston that a near-collision would occur within 11 hours.

The warning said the rocket would be about 1.5 miles (24 kilometres) above the Atlantis at its closest approach.

"Given the uncertainty of tracking abilities... I took the conservative approach and made the decision (to swerve)," fleet Director Phil Engelauf said.

Controllers quickly computed a course change and within an hour, Atlantis's crew was ordered to fire the craft's rocket motors.

With the Atlantis orbiting at nearly 18,000 mph — a collision would have been catastrophic.

"We fired the retrograde rockets for seven seconds, which slowed us (the Atlantis) down and kept us from running towards the object," Mr. Engelauf said.

It was the second straight mission on which a shuttle had to make an unscheduled change of course because of space junk. In September the shuttle Discovery also had to manoeuvre on short notice.

Mr. Engelauf said space debris was of great concern.

"There are all sorts of bolts and nuts, up there that can do us damage," Mr. Engelauf said.

The United States tracks more than 7,000 man-made items orbiting within 1,200 miles (1,900 kilometres) of Earth, the region containing the most-used orbits.

East Timor governor joins doubters of official toll

DILI, East Timor (R) — East Timor's civilian governor and an Indonesian Catholic Church group have questioned the official version of the army shooting on Nov. 12, which sparked an international outcry.

The government says only 19 people were killed when troops fired on mourners at a cemetery in Dili nearly three weeks ago. But Governor Mario Viegas Carrascalao said he was sure that figure would change.

"I am sure it will... I have a feeling that I saw a number of corpses in a truck but I don't have any experience in counting bodies," he told reporters Thursday night.

Some reports have put the death toll as high as 80.

The Indonesian Bishops' Conference, which recently returned from the predominantly Roman Catholic territory, said Friday accounts from witnesses it met were very different from the official story.

"Many people questioned why the army killed so many people. It happened at the gate of Santa Cruz Cemetery, which was far away from the place where the two soldiers were stabbed. If that was for defence were that many victims necessary?" the group said in a statement.

It also suggested that troops had planted weapons on youths who had hidden in a church after earlier riots in Dili.

While the army says its troops shot to defend themselves from a dangerous mob after an officer was stabbed, several witnesses said troops launched an unprovoked attack and fired into the crowd for several minutes.

Jakarta has sent an investigation commission headed by Supreme Court Judge Djelani to the former Portuguese colony to investigate the enquiry. Diplomats say many Timorese may be too frightened to speak out despite assurances by the local military commander of no victimisation.

"It is the same as asking Poi Pot to investigate human rights abuse by the Khmer Rouge," said the Lisbon-based spokesman for a broad opposition alliance of rebel guerrillas and clandestine

civilian groups.

"There is a climate of terror in the capital Dili. No one is going to speak to these investigators and we are going to boycott them," he told Reuters.

Indonesia invaded East Timor after Portugal withdrew its colonial administration, leaving the territory of 750,000 people in the hands of the leftist and pro-independence Fretilin Movement. The United Nations does not recognise Jakarta's annexation.

Indonesia has rebuffed calls for an international investigation and insists its seven-man commission will be fair and objective.

The 89 said to be the total number wounded in the shooting are still in hospital after nearly three weeks. Local sources say other wounded are too afraid to seek medical help.

Meanwhile, the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) said Friday it would encourage Australian tourists to boycott Indonesia to protest against recent killings in East Timor.

ACTU, the umbrella body of Australia's labour movement, rejected calls by some unions to launch a full scale campaign of industrial action against Indonesian interests.

But it said sanctions might be imposed if an Indonesian inquiry into the killings proved unsatisfactory.

The Australian government has said it believed 75 people were killed when Indonesian soldiers opened fire.

About 179,000 Australian tourists visited Indonesia in 1990 — about 85 per cent going to the resort island of Bali.

ACTU said it would call on members to actively support a day of mourning across Australia on Dec. 7, anniversary of Indonesia's annexation of East Timor in 1976.

"On that day, as a mark of solidarity, no ships or planes flying the Indonesian flag will be serviced," it said in a statement.

Unions in the state of Victoria have pushed for national bans against Indonesia's national airline, Garuda, and other Indonesian interests in Australia.

ACTU said it would further review trade sanctions after an assessment of the Indonesian inquiry, an investigation by the United Nations and a visit to Indonesia by Foreign Minister Gareth Evans.

"In this context, the ACTU is prepared to consider putting in place in the future a co-ordinated range of national bans..." it said.

